

To be returned to M^r Phillips
George Hard
A N Lombard

A N S W E R

T O

The Reverend JAMES RAMSAY's Essay,

O N

The TREATMENT and CONVERSION

OF SLAVES,

In the BRITISH SUGAR COLONIES.

By some GENTLEMEN of ST. CHRISTOPHER.

——absentem qui rodit amicum
Qui non defendit alio culpante
Hic Niger est——

HORAT :

BASSETTERE, IN ST. CHRISTOPHER.

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M,DCC,LXXXIV,



*From the SAINT CHRISTOPHER GAZETTE of Saturday, Nov.
20, 1784.*

Extracts from the Marginal notes on the Reverend Mr. Ramsay's
Essay, written by his only Friend.

PA G E 4: What a soul must that be, whose finer feelings are gratified in publishing erroneous and ungenerous charges against a community, where he owns, he was as happily situated as imagination could well paint.--Page 6. Mistaken; exaggerated, &c. no credit can arise to him from this work.--Page 8. Ill nature in every page: nothing but faults mentioned, no merits.--Page 56. Very impertinent, illiberal and unjust general reflection, &c.--Page 60. Pitiful, absurd and false insinuation.--Page 63, Mr. Ramsay ought to be ashamed of so false and groundless an accusation.--Page 64. Very unjust and very ungenerous charge. **F**ie, fie, Mr. Ramsay, you ought to blush indeed! illnatured, wicked, mistaken: deserves punishment for such a libel on the colony.--Page 68, Absurd, nonsense, ungenerous and unjust.--Page 75, shocking, ungenerous, false.--Page 77. False illnatured, cruel, brutish. This horrid brutish charge is rather worse than, and equally as false as, the falsest and the worst parts of the publication.--Page 79. Surgeon, manmidwife, and parson, had no time to study planteriship.--Page 81. Misrepresents.--Page 82, None more complained of than medical, &c. Ramsay should have been silent here.--Page 83. Unjust illiberal.--Page 84. Absurd, highly coloured, never known, conducive to his intimate friends loss of bread.--Page 85. Mr. Ramsay ought to be ashamed of so many aspersions.--Page 84. Should blush to repeat such cruelty: general reflections false.--Page 90. Two plantations one in friendship with Ramsay, the other not: there's the difference.--Page 91. Is not so desirous to do credit as to defame.--Page 93. A man of singular worth, as a member of society, kind and humane master, the author lived at variance with him, as he had with many others; he swallowed any illnatured anecdote and discharged it with much bile and gall.--Page 94. Weakness, wickedness, illnature, unjust, illiberal, untrue, absurd, egregious, misrepresentation.--Page 97.--mistake to be laughed at, not true.--Page 98. If all so healthy, how came the doctor to have a large account against the heirs, some hundreds? this was not true, thou too credulous man!--Page 99. Here he is seized with a fit of phrensy: is a good man so rare as to awaken detraction.

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---Page 104. Mere imagined case: sanguine imagination paints contrary to original: mere rant and rhapsodical effusions.---Page 109. Not language, that can persuade ---Page 128. If so near impossibility, why attempt it?---Page 133. The author at that time had few friends in the island.---Page 170. This woman named Violet was a very great nuisance, she affected to be a doctress, a conjurers, a john-crowe woman. Page 183. None but a greedy vicar could, &c.---Page 189. Never, never, nor could such an idea originate but in a bitter and mistaken mind, or a disordered mind.---Page 215, Absurd, false.---Page 224. Your supposition only.---Page 239. Unpardonably indecent, unjust, ungenerous, more error and illnature than good sense.---Page 267. Such absurd reasoning never published before.---Page 283. The Parson got an ugly fall on a brick floor endeavouring to give one of his house slaves too heavy a kick on the breech for some very trifling offence.---Page 296. Good God! is it possible that a man, who in many respects possesses a good head should be so blind, as not to see how often his observations in the course of this work deny his having intended no slight or injury to individuals, or to any condition or community.---Page 297. Why publish, what you are sensible is liable to be objected to and contradicted? At the end---He has blasted his book by many ill-natured, groundless, illfounded anecdotes, by so much undeserved abuse and so many general and unjust reflections, with so much gall, and so many marks of illnature and illmanners.

E R R A T A.

PAGE 2, line 29, *for free, read forfeited.*

3, line 3, *for freed, read forfeited.*

36, line 27, *for imminent, read im-*
3 DE60
minent.

The general desire of the island to have this Answer published, has fully appeared from the number of Subscribers, above one hundred and fifty copies having been engaged before the work was half-printed off.

A N S W E R, &c.

DE A N Swift has an observation, which, though a glaring truth, is not sufficiently attended to----*That it is rather necessary for an author to understand something of a subject, before he presumes to write upon it.* Had the Author of the Essay now before us, measured his abilities by that standard, his production never would have seen the light. He begins and proceeds through the whole work upon an unaccountable mistake; he lays down, as an uncontrovertible maxim, That, "the relation of master and slave is unnatural, and to be traced to the infernal enemy of all goodness." This is an assertion of which no person ought to be guilty who could read the Scriptures, especially if it was more particularly his duty to do so. Why the Almighty should allow of this establishment, is, perhaps, a question unnecessary, as well as presumptuous. He might do it for our trial, and if human laws do not concern themselves with any improprieties in our behaviour to slaves, we may suppose God will particularly take the matter into his own hands: Vengeance is his, and it may be more severely repaid in this case, as it will in the vices of the thoughts, if we may judge by our Saviour's denunciations against hypocrisy, and the certain punishment attending it from God, though among mankind it stalks unnoticed.

The origin of slavery may be involved in darkness, yet in that most ancient book, the Pentateuch of Moses, slavery is not only expressly allowed but commanded; To alleviate this seeming severity, the humane treatment of slaves is enforced by several laws: Had the Essayist on the treatment, &c. confined himself to the laws of God, and not destroyed his own argument for humanity, by going beyond those laws and proving too much, an error as injurious to the best of causes as proving too little, WE (for there is more than one person employed in this work, that it may be directed by public utility instead of private prejudice) would gladly have seconded his endeavours; but when he flies out into empty declamation of universal liberty, which, in the course of this answer, will evidently appear to be dangerous, absurd, and equally detrimental to the slave as to the master; We cannot permit his reveries, so injurious to their and our interests, to pass unanswered.---- As faults arise in society, that society must endeavour to correct them: For this purpose, We have already began to shew our humane care for these our fellow creatures, who, at present, are useful members of society, but would not continue such in any other rank of life; We some time since unanimously passed an act, that whoever maimed or disfigured a negro, should be fined severely and the negro be free: . This was no empty threat in the new law, as it occasioned the old one to be carried into execution: One of the lower class cut off his negro's ear. He is fined £10, and could an *ex post facto*

facto law have operated, would have been fined £500, or two years imprisonment and the negro freed. The property of slaves was also secured in some instances, and many other privileges and advantages were then proposed for a future day, and have been under contemplation ever since, and We can venture to assert, this desire, if not universal among the inhabitants, is so general, that no one dare oppose it without subjecting himself to censure and contempt. Here then was a laudable purpose, (had it not been carried into execution before the Essay appeared,) likely to be defeated by the injudicious measures, apparently intended to promote it, for as this author's censures are general, and as he produces private anecdotes, not as casual enormities, that spring up in all communities, but as proofs of bad principles, peculiar to, and universally prevalent in this Island, such usage might exasperate us, and unmerited calumny make us regardless of deserving praise. He has dipped his pen in gall, and We wish that we could say that private pique and malice had had no hand in the publication. He has been ill-naturedly and improperly severe; for all his bitterness can be of no benefit to the cause of humanity. Could he have been the cause of making the lives of negroes more comfortable; of obliging those masters who are inhuman to treat them with more tenderness, We, as men of humanity, would have applauded him; but without his appearing to understand the first principles of the subject he treats of, he proposes a visionary project,

ject, an impracticable scheme, and shews us at the same time, that he himself has been at much pains to convince us that it is so. His method of recommending it to our notice is no less injudicious. The Legislators of Antiquity endeavoured to introduce and establish their laws by mildness, by reason, and by shewing their esteem and regard for the community they wished to reform; and by proving from their own example, that there was no difficulty for their fellow citizens, as there was no disinclination in themselves, to pursue those measures they wished to see universally adopted. It remained for modern times to produce a *Soi-disant Philosophe*, who rejecting these antiquated notions, should step forth to found a system by severity of censure instead of mildness; by groundless assertions instead of reason; by general accusations, often deduced from partial misrepresentations, rather fitted to exasperate than persuade, and by setting forth the impracticability of the very scheme he labours to introduce, from his own failure in every instance in his own family, and and from his selling, at his quitting St. Christopher, what he proposes the Island should gratuitously part with, in order to begin his projected reformation.

A laboured system is too heavy reading for our times: This is the age of anecdotes: The author of this Essay on the treatment, &c. probably thought, that the relief of interspersing these pretty little histories, might make those proposals

go down, which had nothing else to recommend them ; and as he has displayed the failings of our Islanders in the worst colours ; We surely may be allowed the liberty of a few anecdotes in defence of an injured community : We shall only produce such as may set those parts of his character in a proper light, which affect the community, but cannot injure his private fortune ; though, in the case of a brother Clergyman, he has not been quite so considerate in his Essay : We could wish to omit any mention of even these errors and passions of his, which injure us as a society ; but We are bound to establish our own character, though at the expence of his credibility : We promise, that in whatever We may introduce of that sort, We will adhere strictly to the truth, and We flatter ourselves we may stand excuseable, from this necessity we are under of wiping off these aspersions, and shewing what real dependance can be put on this Author's strictures against us. We may possibly be severe ; but if truth is severity, We cannot help it, as repeated provocations have at length called it forth : for it has been matter of great surprise to the loyal inhabitants of St. Christopher, That their Island, for these four or five years past, has been so universally censured, and themselves represented as men divest of all just principles and affection to their Mother Country. Conscious of their innocence, they imagined these groundless censures must die away of themselves, and, as they could not conceive from what quarter they sprung, quietly waited till their concealed accuser might blunder

blunder into light. They have reason to think that at last he has emerged, for they can scarce doubt, that He, who has openly stepped forth with such severe accusations, must first have laboured to undermine their character privately, before he dare attempt to attack it openly. Either an open or secret attack was in him the height of ingratitude against a country, where he owns he was “as happily situated as imagination could well paint,” where he has met with every favour and indulgence, and from which he has carried off a genteel fortune. Had he been a declared enemy we could have borne it; but it is he, who through every motive of gratitude, honor, virtue and religion, ought to have continued our companion, our guide, and our most familiar and faithful friend.

Those amiable connections he has now broke through, and as all duties in life are reciprocal, he cannot expect that favour from us, which might discredit this our surmise of his having injured us by secret intelligence, as well as he has endeavour'd to do so by this public attack. Let the world then judge between us, from the following instance, which he cannot deny. When Admiral R----- took St. Eustatius, the Author of the Essay on the treatment, &c. left his Parishes and went down to that place, where he was hospitably received by an inhabitant: The conversation naturally turned upon the capture, and a gentleman in company complained that though he was as loyal

as any man in the British dominions, there seemed to be no line drawn, but that he, an innocent merchant, was treated no better than those who were really guilty of treasonably assisting England's enemies. The Essayist observed, That would best appear, from making all the merchants produce their private correspondence. The meanness, the unlawfulness of such a measure, worse than general warrants, was cried out against by the whole company; but after taking the night to consider of it, he went on board the Admiral early next morning; an officer came on shore to General V----- soon after, and before noon Proclamations were issued for all books of private letters to be delivered at head-quarters instantly: Whence could this arise? there can be no question; but let us do him justice, for from this general order, and subsequent confiscation of effects, through arbitrary surmises, he took care to exempt one person----- Not any former acquaintance, but a Jew of the most infamous character, even among his brethren; upon what weighty consideration is best known to him and General V-----, who produced in the H----- of C----- an Address, signed by this man, his journeymen, apprentices, and dependants, without one more creditable name to it, and by calling it the sense of the Jews in general, covered the depredations he had committed upon others of that religion. But to return to our Essayist. In this secret manner did he injure that community, and his St. Christopher friends may have been secretly injured also, from the same

liberal

liberal sentiments. If he denies this, let him publish all the informations unmutilated, which he has sent to government: If they are true, if they are liberal, if they are for the real good of the Mother Country and Colonies, they will do him honor; if he refuses this satisfaction, We must esteem him----as we do.

As the world has been so strangely misled, as to our public as well as private character, We shall now coolly set forth our own conduct for some time past; We shall advance known facts only, which, if called upon, We can authenticate, and We shall observe through the whole course of this answer the same method; a method, which, if the Essayist had adopted, his long, unwieldy volume would have dwindled into a single sheet, and this answer of ours could have had no cause to call it forth.

The very large sums of money, so liberally raised by us, for encreasing the supply of seamen, ---for the defence of Brimstone-hill,---for the comfort of the military,---and for the relief of our own sufferers in that line, are circumstances quite overlooked by the prejudiced eye of detraction. The cannon being left for the French is thundered in our ears, though, months before our being attacked, they would have been removed, had the Engnieer desired it of his commanding officer. Without orders from the military we had no more right to touch the cannon, than to remove the garrison from the fortress.---After the engagement

engagement of April, 1781, between Hood and De Grasse off of Martinico, every method was used to give intelligence of skulking sailors, and to further a supply of them, by applications to sea and land officers, and by every possible assistance of the civil power; which also endeavoured to bring those persons to punishment, who were so abandoned as to hold correspondence with the enemy: They were delivered up to justice, and by what manœuvre they escaped is immaterial, as the Legislature was not accountable for it: All further attempts were blasted, and a stigma remained fixed upon them.---In May the Council and Assembly repeated their desire of having all cannon and stores transported according to the officer of artillery's direction: No direction, though after these repeated notices, was given: Was the Island to blame?---In July the Council and Assembly ordered all stores at Brimstone-hill to be removed as General Prescott should desire. That worthy officer can clear them of the charge of remissness, and had he not been hastily removed, just at that juncture, the Island, perhaps, never would have been taken by the enemy. His activity would have encouraged that of our militia, whose ardor was cramped by superior command, and who were prevented from attempting a sally, for which they eagerly petitioned, and which in all probability might have saved the country; as there was the greatest reason to think they might have destroyed the French works and batteries, without any considerable loss to themselves. In August the Island

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offered

offered, to that brave but inactive veteran, General Frazer, quarters, and any thing else he might think conducive to his Majesty's service, and the country's protection---In October notice was sent him, that a Frenchman in disguise had been on the hill, and he was humbly intreated to order that no one should go beyond the first centry.---In Nov. he was acquainted, that to expedite matters, instead of having any request laid before the Council and Assembly, a Committee had their orders to furnish him instantly with whatever he desired--- This Committee at the same time authorized the Colonels of militia, to make all necessary preparations for themselves and their regiments to go on immediate service.--- On the 7th of Dec. General Frazer was asked whether he did not think it necessary to have spare red, white, and blue bunting to hoist signals if invested, in order to acquaint our fleet with his situation, if it appeared off the Island. The hint was begged pardon for: the General thanked the proposer, was supplied with the bunting that day, sent the signals next day, and a copy was sent to Commodore Laforey by a vessel that sailed that night.---In short every advice or assistance that the military asked, or could be thought of, was given them; and the behaviour of the militia on the hill, tho' unnoticed by their countrymen, was applauded by their enemies. Governor De Fresne said, there never was an instance of a colonial militia, who held out so long in a siege of so much danger and distress. The happy events which succeeded

ceeded, and probably proceeded from retarding the French forces, by the resolution of the Brimstone-hill garrison in general, (for neither army nor militia could have stood alone) --- the saving of Jamaica, --- the glorious 12th of April, and other attendant circumstances, would swell our answer to the size of his Essay. This is a brief abstract, no part of which can possibly be contradicted; and this may serve to defend our public character from invidious and self-interested attacks; in which last light (to curry favour by falling in with the prejudices and errors of the great, with a view to private advantage,) we must look upon this late publication, and can there be a doubt that the same motive produced, and influenced his secret intelligence? That he did send intelligence we know: what that was, is best known to himself and the person who received it at home; who may now compare it with this short account of our conduct, and then see it in its proper colours; for that it was of the same complexion, as his public composition, may most naturally be supposed; may a sanguine writer like himself, who deals in assertions, would say must evidently and undeniably be concluded. --- Of what complexion then is his book? Horace informs us in the motto prefixed, the second clause of which prompted us to this answer, that we might not be included in the Poet's description.

On a cursory perusal of this Essayist's performance, We judged the first point that required
 B 2 examination

examination was, what entitled him to assume the Dictator? by what authority, what superiority of rank, degrees, or appointment did he presume to be a Legislator, ecclesiastical as well as civil, to form a new code for the West Indies, and censure intruders into the Church. His words are extraordinary, "It is now growing into a custom
 " in the West Indies, for men that have dissipated
 " their patrimony, to flee to the Church as their
 " last refuge from poverty, often with very slender
 " der pretensions respecting education, and less
 " respecting decency of behaviour." Would not any one imagine that the Clergymen of St. Christopher were, at least some of them, to be pointed out by this description. But this is a general reflection for the reader, who has no better information, to apply to our poor Island, and degrade it in his imagination, though there are no grounds for the censure. There is not a single instance of a Clergyman in St. Christopher, who is a West Indian, or ever was a planter. Out of five now resident, three have taken Master's degrees in English Universities, one in Dublin, and the other is an English gentleman of solid learning and unblemished character. We can indeed remember two instances of distressed Planters going into the Church; one in St. Christopher, and one in England. The first was Mr. Hutchinson, whose generosity of disposition, and inattention to his own affairs, had indeed distressed, and obliged him to take orders. He lived contented on a single Parish, where his genteel education, and abilities in the Pulpit,
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added to a humane and charitable conduct, gained him esteem while living, and made him regretted at his death. Another ruined Planter was John Audaine; but We flatter ourselves, that, the gentleman who gave him a living in England, acted with propriety as well as generosity, when We consider how John Audaine behaved in defence of the Island, and that his education might entitle him to accept of the favour. He had a plantation in the country, and a large store, as a merchant, in Sandy-point-town; but quitted both to attend his duty in the militia on the arrival of the French; with a handful of men he nobly opposed the progress of their forces, and when compelled to retreat, retreated to Brimstone-hill. On seeing the enemy in possession of Sandy-point, he was indulged with a flag of truce to wait on the Marquis de Bouillè and endeavour to save his property, or at least his books of account. The Marquis offered him a total indemnification if he would remain and not return to the garrison, otherwise that the whole would be destroyed. His interpreter, by his desire, only answered, *Il est Anglois*; Thus he nobly preferred his duty to his interest, returned to Brimstone-hill, stood the siege, and came down a ruined man; as losses that could not be ascertained, could scarce be expected to be fully compensated. He has now in the west of England a living of about £100 Sterling a year, and it is only to be lamented, that he has scarce a sixth part of what the Essayist affected and still affects to call an inadequate provision. May we not presume to ask of
this.

this severe censurer of others, whether the author of the Essay on the treatment, &c. was or was not an intruder himself? We have made our enquiries, and are informed, that he quitted his religion, and his profession too, (for a while) before he attained the title of Reverend; the Reverend Mr. Scott was severely censured by him for the same step; but the hopes of preferment and enjoying the warm sunshine of orthodoxy in this Island were some consolation for a broken limb, whether on board one of his Majesty's ships or Captain Young's merchant vessel, he may before this have acquainted the Chest at Chatham; a fund sacred to the relief of the poor sailor, which a man of affluence ought to have scorned intruding on, even if justly entitled to it. Though incapable by law to decide upon the lives of his fellow subjects, yet, as Chaplain of a ship of war he succeeded to the cure of their souls, and in his double capacity of Surgeon and Chaplain, went to that gentleman's house, to whom his Captain gave him letters of recommendation. Hospitably received, and at no expence, he for some time administered gratis to the poor in his first profession, to accommodate himself to the temper of his benefactor, apparently from charitable motives only, continuing the practice; till on his getting two livings (as when the fish was caught there was no farther need of the net) he brought in bills to the Parish for those who could not pay him themselves, and superadded his former lucrative profession to his newly acquired parochial emoluments. His patron, who
procured

procured him his livings, censured his conduct in this particular, and spoke his sentiments so plainly, that there all connection ceased. Machiavellian policy teaches, that to prevent the debt immense of endless gratitude being burdensome, the only way is to quarrel with your benefactor, when you have no farther need of him, and then he cannot expect you to be grateful.

How this Essayist on the treatment, &c. conducted himself in his two professions, the sufferers by his *treatment* of them in the first will not permit us to conceal. He was universally complained of as the most harsh, unfeeling surgeon that ever handled an instrument, or assisted at an operation; What pretence then has he to talk of the "finer feelings" who never appeared to have any? The Parish book will shew his conduct as a minister.

" At a meeting of a Vestry at the Parish Church
" of St. John, Capisterre, on Saturday the 12th
" of May, 1770.

" Ordered, That a Copy of the following Letter
" be delivered, by the Church Wardens, to the
" Reverend Mr. JAMES RAMSAY.

" S I R,

" **H**AVING taken into our most serious
" consideration the state of the Parish,
" We

“ We view with concern the decay of manners
 “ among our lower class of people, and the neg-
 “ lect of religion in general : Evils, fatal in their
 “ tendency, destructive of subordination and good
 “ government ; Evils which demand our attention,
 “ and call loudly for reformation. The poor of the
 “ Parish, of all denominations, have no advantage
 “ of forming their morals, no opportunities of ac-
 “ quiring a Christian knowledge, but those derived
 “ from the Desk and Pulpit : We esteem it, Sir,
 “ more particularly your province to check and
 “ correct these growing and dangerous maladies,
 “ by an uniform, regular, and constant exercise of
 “ your function, and by a more steady, pious, and
 “ humble course of behaviour, example being
 “ more prevalent than precept ; and We do here-
 “ by require and demand of you, the full executi-
 “ on of all such parochial duties for the future, as
 “ are enjoined by the Rubrick and Canons of the
 “ Church of England.

“ We are, with due regard, Sir,

“ Your most humble servants,

“ SAMUEL OKES TAYLOR, }

“ THOMAS P. VANDERPOOL, }

“ EDWARD GILLARD, }

“ CHARLES CAINES, }

Vestry

men.

“ HUMPHREY OSBORN, Church Warden.”

To the Rev. Mr. James Ramsay.

Other

Other resolutions of the same purport were taken at subsequent Vestries, but this may suffice to shew what right he could assume from his own behaviour as a Pastor to be so severe upon others, and so cruelly to calumniate his brethren. These letters however were not unanswered: In the Pulpit he could not be contradicted; there he dealt out his personal invectives, 'till his congregation dwindled away by degrees. At Nichola-Town he pursued the same conduct, and was once so inhumanly severe at the burial of a worthy but unfortunate man, that many of the congregation in disgust quitted the church, during the time of service; But now possessed of Nichola-Town and St. John's, Capisterre Parishes, and officiating at several estates for pay as surgeon, his income and influence set him above idle clamours, and raised his ideas so, that even two Parishes were deemed an insufficient maintenance: Others in the clerical line think such emoluments produce a very genteel income, especially as it is free from all taxes, and the Parish keeps the Parsonage-house and buildings in repair at its own expence. To these emoluments were added the honours of the Magistracy, tho' this Essayist did not hold them long: Some private complaints of partiality and injustice, of punishing slaves for obeying their masters orders, and many letters in the public papers in the true stile of an incendiary, ever restless and disturbing the public peace, caused that humane Commander in Chief, Mr. Woodley, to strike him off the list of Justices, and fully disap-
C pointed

pointed his aims of getting into the Council, as his friend's death prevented his being a manager; an occupation he missed of, and has since been so ill-naturedly severe upon. He had now by some correspondence at home, of what sort we leave the world to guess, created an interest; and on a new Commander in Chief coming out, availed himself of it to solicit, and the General was either imposed upon by information, that, as the Island allowance of sugar was 16,000lb. all Parishes were equal; or (if he did know the difference) had the weakness to permit Nichola-Town and Cayon being joined together for his emolument. This point our Essayist pushed with all eagerness, because *Cayon* had £32 sterling a year extraordinary, and the quality of the sugar was near £20 better than in St. John's. Nichola-Town and St. John's have a Parsonage-house almost equidistant between the Churches, and naturally ought always to have gone together. There is in the Island but one Parish that is single, and the Reverend's kindness to his new brethren has contrived, that of all the livings in the Island, the one that is the least valuable, most incommodious, and farthest from the town of Basseterre, consequently most expensive, and deprived of intercourse with governors or men in public capacities, who might prefer the incumbent, should be the single one; but an addition of near £50 sterling to an annual revenue is an object not to be overlooked. Upon what behaviour to his Parishioners or his brethren can he then be entitled to plume himself for
his

his benevolence or humanity, of both which he makes so boastful a profession, and displays his pretensions so ostentatiously in the face of the world? nor yet can he boast of those qualities in the treatment of his slaves; he, when here, punished as severely, if not more so, than any man, as many managers and drivers can testify; and when he left the island, sold them all; and had the barbarity to take £90 (her whole substance) for the freedom of a poor woman, whose life could not be valued at four months purchase, as his first profession might have informed him; but then he said, she in that case could not want it: She died in less than three months. Could humanity, or even justice, have dictated this speech or action? Yet how severe were his judgments upon others? The calamities that have befallen us, as fire, hurricane, inundation, drought, famine, were pointed out as judgments from Heaven, and were to him themes of pleasure and delight. He wished no quarters to be given to the Americans, and arraigned government for their pusillanimity in not destroying root and branch: In a large company, in which was present an honourable, and now much lamented sea-officer, the Essayist, as usual, took the lead in politicks, harangued with such rancour and malice against the then rebels, and pointed out such new modes of destruction, that the honourable gentleman broke out with astonishment, told him such doctrine was fitter for a Disciple of Mahomet, than a Christian Minister, and wished him to be more attentive to the duties of

his profession, than sanguinary politics : whether this happened before or after his violent pamphlet, which, from the reviewers in England, acquired him the name of the Enraged Politician, We cannot say. For that day, however, he was silenced ; though it was a pity that officer did not know the sarcasm he threw out on hearing of the honours paid at the death of that truly great man, his worthy father : when all the rest of the kingdom were lamenting that real national loss, this compassionate, tender pastor expressed his concern that those honours had not been paid him above thirty years sooner. The period may be curious, but We only instance it to shew the asperity of his temper, which could not even spare the dead, if they differed from him in political sentiment, or thwarted his interested views. We may venture one assertion, that the Essayist's temper of mind, could not admit that amiable guest, humanity : These true facts overfet all his pretensions to that virtue, and his whole conduct through life, as surgeon, owner of negroes, and minister, fully discovers the real Deity that influenced his actions---Interest ! Interest the great Goddess Diana, not only of the Ephesians, but of every nation and language under Heaven. Humanity and benevolence are fine pretences ; but interest prompted him while here, to be ever grasping at sea Chaplainships, in order to gain the emolument allowed for that duty, which he was conscious he never could attend to, without neglecting his Parishes on shore ; the two richett of which he had cruelly possessed himself of, merely

merely for the purpose of getting more money by the disposal of them; for he hawked them about for years to every sea and land Chaplain who was likely to be a purchaser at a valuable consideration, and at last broke off from an absolute agreement, on a supposition of getting an additional year's leave of absence, and treating his livings as he had done his chaplainships, receiving the pay, regardless of the duty: Such is part of the clerical history of that man, who, bred a presbyterian and a surgeon, late a rector here, now a vicar in England, exclaims against intruders into the church. We cannot but lament our being forced to exhibit this picture in our own vindication: We allow he has many good qualities; his sobriety, his "ostensible decency," (that lower sort of prudence which often carries off the reward of real merit when accompanied with unguarded openness, and which he will not allow our poor unfortunate brother planters, who, through distress, have been obliged to become his brethren also,) his attention to the duties as well as interests of his family should have shielded him even from just censure, had he not, instead of pursuing the plain path of his peaceful office, run wild into the intricate mazes of dictatorial and mischievous politics: Yet, even in our resentment, he must be conscious of our lenity, and how many circumstances We have had the humanity to suppress, which, as well as those related, could be supported by legal proof.

Honest indignation stops a further examination

of

of his work, till one more cruelty, too glaring to pass over, is treated as it deserves. He has censured the Clergy; the whip of scorpions is next directed against the female sex: He goes on, seeking to attack the most innocent, only as they are the most helpless, most defenceless members of the community; his words, speaking of mulatto-girls, are these--- "In our town the sale of their first commerce with the other sex at an unripe age, is an article of trade for their mothers and elder sisters; nay it is not an uncommon thing for their mistresses, chaste matrons, to hire them out and take an account of their gains." Can he say that in this censure he meant to include Basse-terre only, and that while families live there, they are drawn into the vortex of corruption, but recover their purity again in the country air? No---his censure, if it operates at all, must affect the whole island. If the commerce was carried on uncensured in one place, and gainful, it would have infected the country round about with the same desire of gain, and the same methods of pursuing it. Can this be the man who married into a most respectable Creole family, where humanity, bravery, virtue, were ever acknowledged and esteemed in the numerous sons and daughters it was blessed with, though at one time resident "in our town", and possessed of several mulattoes? Can this be the man who had a wife and daughters, whose characters were ever unimpeached (though once "of our town" also,) 'till he threw out this cruel invective against them? The reverse to
his

his aspersions is the true Creole female character. There cannot be better women in any country than the ladies of St. Christopher. They are sober to a proverb; they are equally virtuous and modest. Within a course of seven years We do not recollect one instance of failure of chastity in any of those families where We have visited, and as We have compared our observations together, We may venture to say, our acquaintance includes every genteel family in the island; As the women are virtuous themselves We cannot think they make their dependants vicious: We can aver, that none of us ever met with any of these procureesses; possibly We might not have searched so diligently: The Reverend Essayist, notwithstanding his "offensive decency of behaviour," might have pursued such enquiries for his amusement, or as experiments in the obstetric art, or natural philosophy: if so, it was barbarous to betray them.---Nothing but experience could vindicate his right to censure; no hearsay evidence could be allowed in so heavy an accusation.

From this sketch of his conduct let the World judge of the dependence they can put on his assertions, and the right he has to step forth legislator of the West-Indies. But giving laws argues a superiority, and the heated imagination of an enthusiast arrogates to himself abilities, which he is not possessed of. A sea Chaplain wrote an Essay on the duties and qualifications of a sea officer, which Essay is universally censured by the navy
as

as an unnecessary, arrogant, and empty performance. Can our Essayist name the author? We can say it was his. As the sea officers condemned that, so in our own case We totally disapprove of his assuming the dictatorial power, and are indeed astonished at it. Would not any lawyer or divine, though he had attained the highest degrees in an English University, though he had been distinguished for his knowledge of human nature, of natural and municipal laws, have been cautious of such peremptory decisions, were his groundwork sure and solid? How much more would he have avoided such despotism, could it be proved that his first principles were founded in ignorance, strengthened by personal malice, and supported by empty assertions only. What can We think of his presumption, who without abilities to decide, or pretensions to support his decisions, refers in general to no authority but his own. *Assen* was presumption: *Dixi* is infinitely more so.--- The division of this work into chapters would lead one to imagine it was regular, but there is no real connection, no logical dependence of parts; so far from it, that it teems with repetitions, contradictions, and absurdities: His vague and desultory manner tires, confuses, and disgusts the reader: His scanty stock of learning is employed to figure away with, but his want of true method, and his awkward, uncouth, unmeaning style shews as fully the stream to be shallow, as the bottom filthy and detestable.

Happy to have got rid of so disagreeable a subject as pointing out his errors who has been so severe upon what he calls "our unconcern and unfeeling neglect," We now begin with his preface, wherein he informs us that, "a letter of an ordinary length in answer to the humane one submitted, gave beginning to the performance, 'till by frequent transcriptions it grew into a system for the regulation and improvement of our sugar colonies, and the advancement and conversion of their slaves." The advice of his friends made him omit every thing that related to the improvement and better government of the colonies," We sincerely believe him, and had he taken that advice in its full extent, his Essay would not have appeared, for that certainly does not tend to improve but destroy them. Can he, whose conduct we have most justly and truly described, talk of humanity being his object? Can he talk of "the finer feelings of the Soul and that when they are engaged it would be criminal trifling to aim at amusement"? Can he say, "he should not forgive himself did ill nature sharpen a single expression"? He may be "incapable of feeling censure" but is he "of that established character that nothing can hurt him"? We beg pardon, he may, for his fortune is made, and if the mask is pulled off, he may still retire and like Swift's discarded minister, who had taken a prudent care of himself, *fruaturs diis iratis*. He tells us, "We have here the remarks of twenty years experience in the West Indies, and above fourteen

D

"years

“ years particular application to the subject” which
 “ if it draws attention will smooth before him the
 “ otherwise rugged paths of life and at least his at-
 “ tention will not lose its reward there, where his
 “ particular aim is to be found acceptable.” His
 rugged paths of life are smoothed by a comfortable
 sufficiency, even if his attention should lose
 its reward there----from those great men, whose
 prejudices to adopt is the ready road to future pre-
 ferment “his particular aim”: The letter favours
 his pretensions by supposing him humane, to
 which it is plain he had no real title. It wishes
 slaves to be improved in morality and religion.
 Who does not wish the same? *utitur in re non dubiis*
argumentis non necessariis. There is no occasi-
 on to prove, that fire will warm and comfort us in
 the winters cold; we only desire to know the
 most effectual means of lighting it with ease and
 maintaining it without danger. The answer of
 the Rev. Essayist to this letter (whether his friend's
 or his own we cannot say) calls the negroes “ un-
 “ pitied & despised objects.” He unluckily prejudices
 & his decision is not true. A freeborn Englishman
 might have lost an ear, and an English Jury might
 not have awarded so considerable damages as £500
 yet he again launches out in praise of humanity,
 talks of tender feelings and runs into a mournful
 tale of “ unconcern and unfeeling neglect.” To
 sanctify this he produces what certainly is a truth,
 “ that it is improper to intrude upon the Sab-
 “ bath,” but he conceals that they who did so,
 had bills of indictment preferred against them, and
 if

if not punished were prevented from repeating such offences. At the close he contradicts daily experience, in asserting "a negroe's natural capacity " to be on a footing of equality in respect of " the reception of mental improvements with the " natives of any other country" He should have said with that *of the* natives ; but we should have an endless task were we to observe grammatical errors : There are so many of more consequence, it is not worth while.----Daily experience contradicts his assertions in things of the most trivial nature ; For instance, not one negro in a thousand, though employed in the house for years, can lay a table or cloth strait or regular, therefore his plan for their improvement and conversion cannot take place, till they are furnished with such abilities and endowments of the mind, as they have not at present and in all probability never may 'till the day of judgment ; when all distinctions may vanish and knowledge be universally diffused ; when every man, whether bond or free, may receive the mark, and the reward of his deeds, whether good or evil.

We now come to his Essay.

Of the various ranks in social life.

Here *in ipso limine obijcitur offendiculum*. That there may be a natural inequality among men, We grant, but how "inequality can prevail" to fit them for society We do not understand ; but no
 D. 2 matter

matter, were We to stop at every unintelligible
 phrase, We should never get through the work,
 and We sincerely long to rid our hands of it. Let
 us go on to what has some meaning. "Human
 regulations are in a moral sense binding only
 when they can be traced immediately or in
 principle to that pure origin, the Author of
 Nature, who is the only rightful Legislator."
 We own this truth; but what is this author's
 deduction from it, or rather his absurd, We had
 almost said, blasphemous assertion, that "the
 terms master and slave are opposite to the laws
 of Nature and of God, and to be traced to the
 infernal enemy of all goodness"? A much a-
 bused, but hitherto unanswered African Mer-
 chant's Treatise upon the trade from Great
 Britain to Africa, printed in 1772, throws the
 clearest light upon the subject of slavery, that has
 ever yet appeared; We would wish to refer the
 reader to the tract itself, as the arguments are car-
 ried on so powerfully as to command conviction;
 but as it is scarce We will do it what justice We
 can, in a short abstract and a few necessary quo-
 tations. In his second chapter on the legality of
 the African trade, after setting forth the disadvan-
 tages of having the invidious side of the question
 to support, he says, "The earliest ages had their
 slaves both taken in war and purchased with
 money, and it has been the universal practice
 of not only every barbarous but every civilized
 nation. By the law of Moses the Israelites might
 purchase slaves from the Heathens, and even
 their

“ their own people might become slaves to their
 “ brethren, until the Sabbatical year; and if they
 “ refused to take that advantage, for ever. The
 “ Gibeonites who gained a promise of peace and
 “ obtained a league by craft from the Princes of
 “ the Congregation were yet consigned to perpe-
 “ tual slavery and made hewers of wood and draw-
 “ ers of water unto all the Congregation, in
 “ which state they continued until the total de-
 “ struction of Jerusalem. Jesus Christ the Saviour
 “ of mankind and founder of our religion, left the
 “ moral laws and civil rights of mankind on
 “ their old foundations: his kingdom was not of
 “ this world, nor did he interfere with national
 “ laws: He did not repeal that of slaves, nor assert
 “ an universal freedom except from sin; with him
 “ bond or free were accepted, if they behaved
 “ righteously. In the year of Christ 692 the laws
 “ of slaves were settled on the foundations of the
 “ holy Scriptures by Ina King of the West Saxons,
 “ from which people’s rights we now claim
 “ and enjoy several privileges, as Gavelkind in
 “ Kent, &c. Mahomed the false Prophet and es-
 “ tablisher of as false a religion was the first who
 “ enfranchised slaves with a political view of draw-
 “ ing them over to his party.” He did so, and he
 “ and they enslaved and destroyed their masters.
 “ From the earliest account of our own country
 “ there were slaves here; from the time of the
 “ Druids, who according to the customs of the
 “ ancient Gauls, sometimes sacrificed them to
 “ their God Woden, to the landing of the Ro-
 “ mans

“mans who are said to have worn out the hands,
 “and bodies of the Britons, with clearing the
 “woods and embanking the marshes : then again
 “under the Saxon feudal tenures, which were of
 “the severest kind, to the time of William the
 “Conqueror, who introduced the Norman feudal
 “system which was of a milder nature ; but still
 “there was no formal interposition of the legisla-
 “ture to prohibit personal servitude : The act of
 “Car. 2d abolished feudal tenures among free
 “British subjects, but did not mention foreign
 “slaves.----The law as it now stands evidently
 “speaks for the slave trade and even humanity
 “pleads as strongly in favour of it ; for
 “it is a well known fact, that if the slaves which
 “the Africans bring to market are so old or ble-
 “mished, that they cannot get what they think
 “a sufficient price for them, they will cut their
 “throats before the faces of the Europeans : How
 “happy then is the slave who is rescued and how
 “justifiable he who rescues him from a master
 “where he has no property, and where even his
 “life is not secure, in order to his being transfer-
 “red to one who cannot invade either with im-
 “punity.----Were England to drop the African
 “trade directly, France and Spain would as direct-
 “ly avail themselves of it, and the poor Africans
 “remain still in bondage under much severer task-
 “masters.” That the French and Spaniards
 are so, is an undoubted truth, though the Es-
 sayist from a single instance or two argues their
 superior humanity in all. Is it rational to suppose
 that

that they who are so cruel to the whites, are so extraordinarily humane to the blacks? or may they not seem to hold out freedom to them, as they did to the Americans, to deprive us of these colonies also and rob England of her sugar, the only staple commodity now left for importation? The best writers on trade allow that the African trade is of the highest concern to Great Britain; it has been the greatest object of foreign envy, and may again, with care. But to proceed: "Mr. Benezet of North America who wishes the West-India islands sunk in the sea rather than we should carry on the slave trade for their service, may possibly have the same kindness and good will to Great Britain, and may sincerely long to see the seat of empire travel Westward and the dominion of the Saints established at Boston."---- This last conjecture has been since verified to our great national loss:----The author then confutes Mr. Hargraves's arguments in Sommerfet's case; (observing that the Counsellor modestly on his title page does not say proving, but, endeavouring to prove the unlawfulness of slavery in England) and refers us to his appendix for a fuller discussion of the subject. There we find that among the heathen, from the earliest account of time, conquest was the plea for enslaving vanquished countries. Herodotus mentions the cruelties of the Scythians to their prisoners of war, whom if they did not carry away captive, they put to death on the spot. The origin of slavery and colour of the Africans being incapable of positive proof, those points are
left

left to the curious, with a conjecture that Joseph's buying the bodies and lands of the Egyptians for Pharoah, seemed to shew that the practice was more antient than even his time, as indeed is clear from his having been sold himself, and Abram's possessing a bondwoman; and we may date it still higher from a denunciation, thrice repeated, against the descendants of Canaan, who are allowed to have settled in Africa, Gen: x, 25. "Curst be Canaan, "a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren.-- "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, Canaan "shall be his servant.--God shall enlarge Japheth, "and shall dwell in the tents of Shem and Canaan "shall be his Servant."---It is not to be supposed that prophetic denunciations of any sort shall be given in vain; and it may be at least worth our while to trace what other accounts of slavery we have in Holy Writ, or where we may date the æra of its origin. In Gen. XIII, 2, Abram's wealth is thus described, "Abram was very rich "in cattle, in silver and in gold." In the next chapter the Kings of Shinar, Ellasar, Elam, and the nations make war on the Kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Bela, and carry away Lot, Abram's brother, captive. This is the only captive we hear of, till on the King of Sodom's coming to Abram and proposing a division of the spoil recovered, he says, "give me "the persons and take the goods to thy self." In the 16th chapter Abram's wife is recorded as having a handmaid, or bondmaid, (as she is called in another place) and Sarai's power over her is not disputed

disputed by Abram ; nay when she absents herself from her mistress, an Angel finds her and says
 “ Hagar, Sarai’s maid, whence camest thou and
 “ whether wilt thou go. And she said I flee from
 “ the face of my mistress Sarai. And the Angel
 “ of the Lord said unto her, return to thy mistress
 “ and submit thyself under her hands.” In the
 24th chapter, Abram’s wealth is thus described by
 his servant. “ The Lord hath blessed my master
 “ greatly and he is become great, and he hath
 “ given him flocks and herds and silver and gold
 “ and men servants and maid servants and camels
 “ and asses.” These transactions were prior to
 Joseph’s being sold by his brethren to the merchants;
 captives or slaves were by that time grown into a
 common article of trade : Joseph was sold for
 twenty pieces of silver, the law afterwards raised
 it to thirty. Shall we presume to call that act in-
 humanity which is permitted by the Almighty,
 practiced by the Father of the faithful and conti-
 nued as an establishment during the Theocracy (as
 appears, Numbers xxxi. by the Lord’s Tribute
 of Captives) and even till the dispersion of the
 Jews ; nor yet is it ever forbidden by the Saviour
 of mankind. Wherein then consists our duty with
 respect to these persons, whom we call unhappy,
 but many of whom are much less so, than the ge-
 nerality of ourselves ? We may see this also in
 Holy Writ ; and God grant that our laws may as-
 sume that as their foundation and establish a pro-
 priety of treatment of slaves in every particular,
 and that our Religion may inspire us with that

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Christian

Christian Charity which improves and sublimates the virtues of the Moral Law.--The author proceeds, " By the commandments from the mount " their proper treatment only is exacted, not their " freedom." On the Sabbath they were not to work : They were by other laws to be free, if they lost an eye or a tooth by a master's blow : they were to be purchased of the nations round about and of the children of the strangers, that sojourned among the Israelites, and to be an inheritance for their children after them, as is clear from Leviticus, chap. xxv. 39 to 46 inclusive : Yet even a King could not injure them with impunity ; Seven sons of Saul were hung up before the Lord, as a punishment for his having slain some Gibeonites, some of those who were " hewers " of wood and drawers of water," slaves in perpetual bondage : and though so severe a sentence was pronounced and executed against his family who injured them, they still continued in the same state of slavery ; their proper treatment, not their liberty, was secured to them by divine command. He proceeds, " Look at the state of slaves " in Africa, there those indeed are sold who are " slaves by descent, or have committed theft or such " villainies as the laws of their own country condemn them to slavery for (like the instance of " Benjamin whom Joseph claimed as his servant, " on the cup's being found in his sack) : There " they have no chance of ever being free : There " they have no sort of property, and their very " lives are subject to their master's caprice, without

"out fear of punishment or being in any degree
 "accountable. Some indeed are captives taken in
 "war, whom, if we did not purchase, they would
 "massacre. The barbarity of their own masters
 "makes them think we buy them only to eat
 "them and this mistaken notion is the only thing
 "that tempts them to rise in mutiny: But of all
 "those who have purchased their freedom, or
 "whom the liberality of their masters has made
 "free, not one individual, (fairly purchased not
 "stolen) ever yet returned or wished to return to
 "their own country; nor would any one of them
 "accept of their freedom on such terms. Who
 "then are we that judge other mens servants? by
 "their own laws they are such." He next consi-
 ders Lord Mansfield's speech on the negro cause,
 not allowing it the name of decision, and only
 looks upon it as a virtual prohibition of bringing
 negroes to England.----He compares the 29th
 Clause of Magna Charta "No freeman shall be
 "taken, imprisoned or disseized of freehold, li-
 "berties, or free customs, but by a lawful judg-
 "ment of Peers, or by the law of the land"
 with that of Edward 6th chap. 3. "He that takes
 "a servant or beggar idle three days together,
 "shall have him as his slave and if he does not
 "work, may treat him as a slave, with chains,
 "imprisonment or stripes." This is a very great
 and very essential difference and shews there were
 freemen and slaves in those days, and the different
 manner of treating them. He then proceeds to
 give farther authorities from the new testament

and cites many parts mentioning bond and free among the ranks of social life, which distinction could not have been kept up, had liberty, civil liberty arisen from, or been commanded by the dictates of Christianity. “Slaves, though lowest in the civil polity, are allowed equal in all spiritual concerns : they are included in the prophecies concerning the day of judgment, so that slavery may possibly remain ’till then,” how near that may be, God only knows.---Then follows an extract from a Pamphlet by a West-India-Planter, setting forth the nature of the West-India climate and the impossibility of cultivating the soil by any but negro-labourers. He quotes Ligon’s account of the settlement of Barbados in 1625, when the woods were so thick that 20 years afterwards he found potatoes, maize and bonavists planted between the boughs, lying along upon the surface. Nothing was done towards a profitable settlement of the island until the introduction of negroes ; by whose better capacity for labour it was so improved that, in 1646, it contained 20,000 whites and a far greater number of blacks. The judicious Linde says, “there are some services of such a nature, as cannot be performed by Europeans in hot and unhealthy countries, without immanent danger of their health and lives.” He gives several instances, yet he is no friend to slavery, but to truth only and real necessity. “If our seamen,” says he, “who are the hardiest of our common people and most inured to change of climate, are so unequal

“unequal to the task, much less adapted to it are
 “others of the lower class in England or those
 “who might be most likely to hire themselves
 “out to plantation service.” The Palatines, who
 had lands granted to them in Jamaica, almost all
 died in the attempt of clearing them. After many
 other similar instances he concludes. “We must
 “either abandon all these settlements, ruin many
 “thousands of our fellow subjects, and resign our
 “fortunes into the hands of foreign powers, dis-
 “fering from us in sentiments, or we must con-
 “duct them, as hitherto we have successfully
 “done, by the labour of negroes; whose consti-
 “tutions being by nature and the Divine will ap-
 “propriated to these climates are evidently fittest
 “for such employments there.” Other tracts of
 the same tendency are noticed and the charitable
 Mr. Benezet’s unfair quotations animadverted on,
 who boldly asserts that, “the Portuguese first
 “stealing and then purchasing slaves, through an
 “inordinate desire of gain, first raised the same
 “desire in the negroes, and was the origin of
 “slavery there. To prove this point Benezet
 “gives partial extracts from the history of Africa,
 “and omits whatever makes against him. He tells
 “you from Cada Mosto that, “the Portuguese land-
 “ed and stole the natives,” but omits that, Cada
 “Mosto himself, the first time he discovered and
 “landed on that coast, saw an horse among the na-
 “tives, that was valued at fifteen slaves, which were
 “consequently an article, perhaps the medium of
 “trade at that time, in 1454. Benezet represents
 “ the

“the Africans as people endowed with great
 “talents and virtue;” yet supposes “the slave
 “trade is kept up by the advantages we find it
 “our interest to give them.” He mentions that
 “the Fuli, a nation on the Gambia, sell no slaves.
 “What an exact character of the British nation
 “would an author give, who should assert that we
 “would not fight, because one sect among us re-
 “fused to bear arms. The Fuli may be looked up-
 “on in the same light: They are a particular sect
 “and the doctrine of not selling slaves holds good
 “with them to this hour as to their own nation;
 “neither can any price tempt them to sell you a
 “calf tho’ they will dispose of a barren cow for two
 “gallons of brandy; and tho’ they thus observe
 “their own laws as to their own people, yet they
 “will sell slaves which they purchased up the coun-
 “try. Benezet also omits Captain Jobson’s ac-
 “count of his voyage up the river Gambia in
 “1621, when women slaves were offered him for
 “goods, but he refused them and said the English
 “did not trade in them. So that it is evident,
 “that that trade arose from the Africans them-
 “selves and we are not accountable for the origin
 “of it, notwithstanding this author’s assertion.
 “He draws together into one view all the cruelties
 “which have ever been practised by Captains of ships
 “to deter their slaves from rising, or by the plan-
 “ters to keep them under subjection; and by fol-
 “lowing the same rule and collecting all the in-
 “stances of barbarity practised by individuals in
 “the most humane and best civilized nation upon
 earth

“ earth, such a picture might be drawn as human
 “ nature would start at. He humanely advises us
 “ to employ our own natives in the sultry heats of
 “ the colonies and charitably wishes them all sunk
 “ in the sea rather than carry on the African slave
 “ trade for their service. Sure slaves abroad should
 “ be under an obligation of working for their liv-
 “ ing, as well as natives of England are at home ;
 “ and in many cases the latter labour harder and
 “ fare worse : they certainly have a severer cli-
 “ mate to contend with, as their cloathing runs
 “ away with great part of what they want to pur-
 “ chase provisions ; while slaves abroad want lit-
 “ tle or no cloaths and are not injured by the in-
 “ tense heat of the sun.---Seduced by this specious
 “ side of the question, influenced by humane mo-
 “ tives and misinformed of the real state of slaves
 “ in our colonies, even the Bishop of Gloucester,
 “ in his Sermon in 1766, warns us to send them
 “ to their native homes. Poor creatures ! not
 “ one would accept of the offer, but would think
 “ it the greatest inhumanity to force their return.”
 May there not be a Bishop at present equally mis-
 informed, equally led away by imaginary accounts
 of cruelties, which have no existence but upon
 paper, and may not an “ ostensible decency” be
 construed into tenderness and humanity ? If so,
 the Essayist on the treatment, &c. may have some
 reason for his publication.---“ That in the native
 “ Africans’ sale of negroes to our shipping various
 “ frauds have been committed, and persons im-
 “ properly and unjustly sold---That Masters of
 ships

“ ships have been inhumane nay unnecessarily so--
 “ That Planters have been wantonly cruel with-
 “ out cause, may be supposed from the enormity
 “ of crimes among ourselves. To these abuses
 “ then let efficacious remedies be applied ; Mer-
 “ chants and Planters will own the highest obliga-
 “ tions to Government, if by salutary laws it can
 “ alleviate the distresses of those, whose labour
 “ supports our colonies and enriches our native
 “ country ; but for the other unnecessary and
 “ impracticable scheme of universal freedom, (the
 “ device of the Puritans of North America,
 “ who now cry out for perfect liberty, as they
 “ once did for perfect purity, till they destroyed
 “ all real religion and ruined both Church and
 “ State ; and who began these their last outcries,
 “ as appears by the dates of their works, only on
 “ our asserting our jurisdiction over them) from a
 “ careful review of laws human and divine, who-
 “ ever attempts to promote it must be declared a
 “ stranger to both ecclesiastical and civil polity and
 “ an utter enemy to his country.”

This African Merchant professes to make the
 word of God his guide, to retain slaves as slaves,
 but to ensure their being humanely treated : The
 advantages he stipulates for them are---That they
 shall be secure in their lives and limbs, that if
 any Planter or other of his Majesty's free subjects,
 through wantonness or cruelty, maims a negro or
 disfigures him, or causes him to be maimed or dis-
 figured, such negro shall be free : and if the said
 negro

negro dies, the person who was the cause thereof shall be accountable to the laws; as for the loss of any other of his Majesty's subjects; that they shall have proper cloathing and sufficient maintenance, and never be punished with above forty stripes, except by the lawful Magistrate; that none shall be exported to Europe, nor sold to the French, nor stolen from the coast under the severest penalties: In this author's much abused work there is more real humanity than in all the pretences of those who have presumed to censure, though they were incapable of answering it. We applaud the Essayist's prudence, who totally suppresses the mention of it: We suppose he observed the weakness of his friend Mr. Sharp's attempts to invalidate it even by unfair quotations--Sharp wanted some support: The Essayist vouches for him; he could do no more.

From this brief abstract of the African treatise it appears incontestably, that slavery was not only allowed but commanded by the word of God, notwithstanding the confident assertions of the Reverend Essayist and Granville Sharp whom he celebrates; and it is as clear that true humanity consists in securing to them good usage and proper treatment in that state of life wherein Providence has placed them:---Did any of the best instructions of the most sensible and virtuous Sea-Chaplain ever operate so powerfully on the minds of a ship's company, as to supersede the necessity of corporal punishment? certainly they never did;

F

and

and if those honest, brave, generous fellows are obliged to be kept in awe by a dread of that sort of punishment, what can we expect of men who have neither their knowledge nor their sentiments. That amusing horror, that arises from over strained and exaggerated pictures of cruelties, seldom practiced and by very few, the faults of individuals not the general customs of the community, is a pretty introduction to the enthusiastic rant of universal freedom: a freedom that would be as injurious to those poor creatures, for whose benefit it is pretendedly calculated, as detrimental to the rights of their owners, and destructive of the interests of society, and religion too; for if ever the Africans are converted, it must be in their present state. Look at the free Caribbs of St. Vincents! Whata miserable, worse than savage life do they lead. Yet the French laboured to introduce religion amongst them, but laboured in vain. They could not even civilize them so far, as to inspire them with decency. Their cloathing is a string round their middles, and a narrow slip of cloth tucked into it before and behind. Their behaviour is a mixture of insolence and cruelty. When General V----- went off, just as the French forces were coming to surrender to him, the Caribbs plundered and burnt several English plantations and murdered the innocent whites that were residing on them. They have by much the richest and finest part of the country, yet their whole cultivation consists of a little Indian corn, and such herbs and fruits as nature produces to their hands,

hands, without any assistance of art or care: they go a fishing in their canoes, make one gluttonous meal, and live the rest of the week upon stinking fish in lordly laziness and contented brutality. Hunger forces them out again, and the same dull round of beastly indolence is repeated: no good usage, - no instructions, no rewards can bring them to labour, or even society. (Is it to be supposed that the slaves of any other island would behave better if free, when they cannot even now bear a third holy-day without injuring themselves or masters? At Christmas they have three allowed them,) the first they enjoy, the second they are tired of and the third is a scene of fighting among themselves or pilfering in the grounds round about them. How much happier are the regularly-employed slaves of a humane master? We cannot figure to ourselves a situation in life, where a person of fortune can more nobly exert his christian charity, than the planter among a numerous gang of slaves; nor a society, where every individual can be happier than those slaves under his direction: He looks upon them as the causes of his wealth, as a sort of children labouring for the advantage of the head of the family; and they look up to him as their common parent, their feeder, their protector. There needs small persuasion, in our opinion, to induce them to be their instructors also, in which requisite but arduous task we make no doubt of finding Clergymen on the Island who would readily co-operate, who have neither vocation nor avocation to prevent them, who are neither em-

ployed by surgery, nor distracted by politick's. - The esteem of slaves in general, their love for their owners at present is great, is almost enthusiastic. When the French came here, their masters were obliged to use all their influence to prevent their running naked upon armed men to avenge their cause, when they fancied their masters affronted by them. And shall these bonds of society be broken by false pretences of humanity and unmeaning rant, that has neither reason nor religion to support it, but is the true language of imposture? From Benezet down to our Reverend Essayist all writers in the cause of universal freedom have applied to the passions, not the reason; have endeavoured to mislead the judgment by misinforming the understanding: Granville Sharp is one of the most specious advocates for this cause; yet like his brethren he runs into absurdity by misinterpreting the plain words of Scripture, and producing partial quotations from the treatise upon the trade from Great Britain to Africa. The author of that treatise carries on his arguments with good sense and precision: and it would have been happy for the British nation if their Prime Minister, when that was published, had paid some attention to a book, that was publickly recommended by all real African Merchants: The improvement of the trade to Africa might have prevented the destruction of that to America. Temple Luttrell distinguished himself by endeavouring to set on foot an enquiry into the abuses on the coast, and the conduct of the Committee: The eloquent Irish Patriot quashed it:

a namesake and relation was one of that years committee : but those abuses and the wretched state of the forts must by this time be so encreased, as to demand immediate relief, if they are not too far gone to admit of it. The helm is now in the hands of one whose good sense and integrity may procure and employ information to the benefit of the kingdom.---But to return to those advocates for liberty, which it is apparent they do not understand and to that most specious declaimer Granville Sharp. He runs from the plain words of scripture, for tho' stubborn truth forces him to acknowledge that the Israelites were allowed to purchase slaves of the heathen or nations round about them, yet he labours to confine that permission "to those nations who for their impieties were doomed by the divine command to utter destruction. They" says he "were to be utterly destroyed. The Israelites were not to pity, not to spare, but to kill male and female, infant and suckling"---yet--- "of these nations only were they to purchase slaves." We profess we cannot reconcile this to common sense, but must leave it to him to explain : to us it appears very much like Captain Gorman's going to an uninhabited island and marrying the Queen of the country.---To such absurdities will a writer be reduced "who removes the ancient land marks "till the very boundaries of right and wrong are confused and undistinguishable.-From this permission of purchasing slaves being confined to these nations, (which to be sure is a steady solid foundation,

dation, built on his assertion only) he infers that
 moderns are not justifiable in making slaves of any
 nation: How candidly the phrase is altered, in-
 stead of buying he substitutes making, a word of
 his own, which he may soon perhaps hunt down,
 as if it was not a creature of his own producing.
 Certainly not in making; but they are justifiable
 in purchasing those, who are slaves already, be-
 cause they thereby better their situation. The
 King of Barfalli's slaves would gladly travel to the
 ends of the earth to avoid his murderous hands,
 who tryed his musquets on them as they were pad-
 dling in their canoes, which he sent on the river
 for that very purpose, and whenever he shot one
 through the head would laugh, turn round to his
 courtiers and praise the excellency of his aim: and
 when an English Captain demanded justice against
 one of his black subjects, who in the public market
 had cut a slave's throat because he would not come
 up to his price, the King deliberately answered,
 he was that man's slave, he had a right to do what
 he pleased with him.-If we in a fair sale purchase the
 services of a man and use him humanely when
 purchased, do we not better his condition?
 Throughout the whole coast of Africa, the power
 of masters and owners of slaves is the same, and
 though all do not exert it so inhumanely, all may
 do so.---A freeman, who indents himself, sells his
 own services: A slave cannot sell them, because
 they are his owners property by the laws and cus-
 toms of his own community; but the buyer has
 an equal right to both. This is a point Mr. Sharp
 endeavours

endeavours to confuse ; but truth is clear, and plain sense easily develops it and leads it from the mists of studied obscurity to the clear light of unsophisticated reason and perspicuity.---Lancelot-like, he tries more confusions with us. Tho' he omits the divine permission, nay, command to purchase slaves of strangers, who were to be a perpetual inheritance to the Israelites and their children after them, yet having adduced the laws of benevolence to strangers, he slips in slaves as a synonymous term, and argues equal benefits for them : Can any thing be more plain, than that these may be *toto Cælo* different ? A stranger may be a freeman : he may be a slave. It is his own law, not ours, that makes him a slave or free ; and benevolence and hospitality are to be extended to him according to the rank he holds in his own society. Would we entertain an Admiral and a common Sweeper in the same manner ? --Mr. Sharp however triumphs in this discovery, and goes on in the same mistake. He threatens us for withholding the wages of the labourer and brings the denunciations of holy writ against this crime of his own forging : for surely we cannot keep wages back, when we have paid them before hand by our purchase : We might as rationally expect to be indemnified by the seller, if a slave happened to die the day after we bought him : The chance of one establishes the right to the other. - Another mistake must be a willful one also. We are in some particulars, if Mr. Sharp's authority is to prevail, to be subjected to the Jewish ordinances, and to have

no right to our slaves, after the Sabbatical year: yet even among the Jews, that privilege was not extended to the Nethinim. It is peculiar to these writers to omit what makes against them and harangue as if there was no such example to be produced. Mr. Sharp in many places asserts, that there never was an instance of slaves being retained in a community by divine authority; but he takes care to make no mention of the Gibeonites, who were in that state, "hewers of wood and drawers of water," in the peculiar service of God in the Temple. God was the King of the Israelites, and would hardly have retained in his own Courts any persons under an institution, that was "unnatural, and to be traced "to the infernal enemy of all goodness." Yet Mr. Sharp, though this instance of the Nethinim stares him in the face, tho' the Israelite himself, if he should once forego the advantage of the Sabbatical year, was a slave forever, positively asserts, that "servitude continued from parent to child in "perpetuity is no where mentioned in scripture "with approbation." What is commanded must be approved: The plain words of scripture that prove the one do as fully establish the other, and Mr. Sharp himself in his appendix allows what he denies in the body of his work, that there might "be bondmen for ever". But we can never expect order in a building, where the foundation totters, or rather overthrows itself. ---His next assertion tends to destroy society, and would injure it materially, if it were true, "that slavery is sub-
versive

versive of brotherly love." We have known it carried on each side to an extravagance: The slave has ventured his life for his master: The master has run the risk of his to protect that of his slave: Greater "love than this can no man shew": if therefore this love should cease, these authors are accountable for the destructive consequences of that disunion which their incendiary pens occasion in the community.--As to the Havannah laws, a despotic government may risk some danger, because they can immediately apply a remedy. Whether our government ought to do so, let our legislators determine for us.---Mr. Sharp makes a mournful declamation about the ills of slavery and asks us, if we were enslaved on the African coast, would not we wish to get home. This is the old mistake: We are free at home, and therefore would wish to be there: The Africans are not, and do not wish it.----Mr. Sharp having thus in his own opinion proved "that there is guilt in our even tolerating "slavery" adds, "that the whole British Empire "is involved in it, as appears by public Acts of "Parliament, &c." If this is the case, let the reformation begin at the fountain head, and let its ruinous consequences equally affect all the members of the British Empire, but dont let us be the sole sufferers, who act only according to the established laws of our country, founded on those of God.---We flatter ourselves that the unprejudiced reader will by this time see that slavery is not only allowable by laws divine and human, but that the Africans, if they knew their own interests, would
G rather

rather wish to be slaves under an humane master, than free in any country, even in England. There are many instances of slaves, who have been carried to England, have there been inveigled away from their masters, or have quitted them in an idle humour, who yet have returned to our island, and given themselves up to their former owners; and there are many more instances of slaves, who have wished and endeavoured to do so, but could not contrive the means. On these authors therefore, who would injure society by striking this necessary link out of the chain, no stress can be laid, no dependance can be admitted; and least of all on the Reverend Essayist, who has no claim to those qualities he pretends to recommend as the overflowings of his own tender disposition: We now return to his work, to the same chapter where he traces the commands of God, to that pure fountain, “The infernal enemy of all goodness.” The cant of all enthusiasts is the same. American Quakers, that conscientious sect, many of whom could draw the sword against, tho’ they scrupled to do it for, England, are “fervent in their labour for the restoration of the poor enslaved Africans to their due liberty” and the London Quakers “approve and concur in the removal of an oppression, supported by cruelty for corrupt interest in direct opposition to the spirit and precepts of the Gospel and even repugnant to humanity.” These are the men who have broken one link out of the social chain, and wish to destroy another; who take their share of the benefits of
society,

society and leave the burden to be borne by others by their exemption from civil and military duties, not to mention that unmerited indulgence in a superiority over the rest of society as their word is set on a par with the oath of others ; But they bought their privileges and purchased a title, being dubbed Christians by Act of Parliament.---We might rest the cause on the merits of what has been already laid down to prove, that slavery is one of those links of the great chain of social life, without which it could not be supported, but We shall take the trouble of proceeding through the volume, still reserving the titles of the chapters, and wherever We find any thing materially meriting praise or censure, (though it would be too arduous a task to notice all exceptionable passages) bestow them freely ; We have no doubt of being fully able to confirm what laws divine and human have established, the property of the master, and We hope to promote and secure the good treatment and happiness of the slave.

The Ranks into which the Members of a
Community necessarily separate.

This subject, nearly as old as communities themselves, receives no illustration from the Essayist's pen. One unhappy truth has escaped---“ designing men, otherwise unable to work themselves into notice, set up at every trifle a clamour against government to enhance their price and pave the way to their own ambition.” This is

not the only place where general reflections may be construed into personal invectives, and the ball rebound against the hand that flung it.---The whole of this Section is mere declamation and nothing to the purpose, unless a curious assertion may be deemed so; "Slavery being the negation of law cannot be compatible with it." There may be sophistry in this, but there is neither truth nor reason, as has been fully proved.---As this work is so irregular, We shall leave breaks between the different subjects we touch upon---had he preserved any connection, We might have done so too.

Master and Slave in Antient times.

The Reverend Essayist here owns that Moses's law did create perpetual slavery, tho' before he traced it to Satan. Strange inconsistency, but what must ever be expected when a work is calculated to fall in with the prejudices of misinformed great men instead of the advancement of truth. We are here also acquainted, that "at Athens a slave was "happier than a freeman in any other part of Greece." We can very easily suppose, that that wise nation established the most prudent regulations and improved society by the most salutary laws, and We are very certain, that happiness is far from being confined to universal freedom, though the want of the Athenian laws, and their own military genius, as certainly made the Romans cruel.---The story of Plutarch flogging Syrus and coolly arguing with him between every
lash.

last reflected no honour on that great man ; yet if that argument consisted not only of his own vindication but of admonition, and caution to Syrus not to be guilty of the same fault again that occasioned the punishment, the scene might be imagined without going to America or the West Indies.-- After having mentioned Raynal's assertion that, " the abolition of Slavery and Paganism by Edict " brought on the ruin of the Roman Empire," and after having set forth the danger of great changes, We might naturally have expected he would have allowed the impropriety of making the experiment in our Colonies ; it is certain they exist through black labourers only ; but if an author can gain a favourite point, no matter if they were sunk in the sea, according to Mr. Benezet's charitable wish.

Master and Slave in Gothic times.

Here we are brought back to the first false principle, for tho' in the last Section the Essayist owned that Moses's law created slavery, yet here he asserts that, " slavery was unknown 'till European " infernal love of gold introduced and fixed it." He allows that " Americans behave worse to indented servants, than we to slaves." The author of the treatise on the trade from Great Britain to Africa has this observation, which may explain the reason : " It has been said, the number of negroes sent to the Colonies arose from so many dying there from ill usage, but that is by no means true : The Planters consider their own interest, and

“and use them better than they do our own con-
 “victs, for this plain reason, that in the latter they
 “have only a temporary interest, in the former a per-
 “manent one; so that were our plantations abroad
 “capable of being carried on by indented servants
 “from England, the same reasons would hold
 “good, and the labour they must undergo being
 “increased by the short duration of property their
 “masters had in them, and by their own unfitness
 “to work in those hot climates, would be such a
 “drain of men as the parent country could not
 “support.”

Master and Slave as proposed for
 Scotland, Anno 1698.

“Fletcher grounded a plan of slavery on a
 “Statute enacted in 1579, that empowered
 “any person of sufficient estate to take the child
 “of any beggar and educate him for his own ter-
 “vice for a certain term of years, which term
 “was extended for life in 1597.” This the Reve-
 rend Essayist falls in with at first, then flies off
 and calls it “inadmissible,”---He says that “St.
 “Paul is pressed into the service of slavery against
 “the plain gramatical sense of the expression in the
 “original.” What a pity the quotation was not
 “produced, but assertion costs less than proof. Let
 us hear St. Paul speak for himself, as in 1 Cor.
 7c. 20 v. &c. “Let every man abide in the same call-
 “ing, wherein he was called. Art thou called being
 “a servant? care not for it, but if thou mayest be
 “made

“ made free, use it rather. For he that is called
 “ in the Lord, being a servant is the Lord’s free-
 “ man; likewise also he that is called being free,
 “ is Christ’s servant. Ye are bought with a
 “ price, be not ye the servants of men : Brethren
 “ let every man wherein he is called, therein a-
 “ bide with God.” These verses are thus ex-
 pounded by the whole class of ancient Greek Inter-
 preters ; “ Be not concerned, nor think, if you
 “ are a slave (δσλῶς) you will be less acceptable
 “ to God, or as if that condition was unworthy of
 “ a Christian ; therefore do not attempt to shake
 “ off the yoke of slavery under a pretence that
 “ through Christianity all are free ; but if by just
 “ means you acquire your liberty, preserve it, that
 “ no master may have power over you, to cause
 “ you to sin. Therein consists the true Christian
 “ liberty ; therefore as I said at first, remain qui-
 “ etly in that state of life wherein God has placed
 “ you, as a duty you owe to him as well as to
 “ the community.” These are the African Mer-
 chants sentiments, which upon examination We
 find to have that authority, which he claims for
 them ; And We also found (from the comments
 of Chrysostom and other ancient writers of that
 class upon St. Paul’s Epistle to Philemon,) that
 the universal decision of the primitive Church was,
 that “ Christianity did not impair the power of
 masters over their bond-servants.” As the an-
 cient Greek Interpreters thus asserted that Christi-
 anity did not impair the power of masters over
 their bond-servants, We need not be surprized at
 seeing

seeing the same doctrine held by Bishop Sherlock
 in one of his discourses at the Temple Church,
 on “ Rom : XIII. 1. Let every soul be subject
 “ unto the higher powers ; For there is no pow-
 “ er but of God : the powers that be are ordained
 “ of God.”-----“ Government is agreeable to
 “ the Will of God, and to pretend an exemption
 “ from it would be acting in opposition to his
 “ will, and the order of his establishment, for
 “ which We have the express authority of St.
 “ Jerom and St. Chrysostom. As some pretend-
 “ ed to withdraw their obedience from the Prince,
 “ because they had been made partakers of the
 “ freedom of the Gospel ; so others, who were in
 “ a state of servitude, thought they had a right to
 “ throw off their bondage, supposing a state of
 “ slavery to be inconsistent with the liberty of the
 “ Gospel of Christ : They went upon the same
 “ reason which the others did, and pleaded their
 “ relation to God and Christ as a full release from
 “ the condition of slaves. The Apostle there-
 “ fore uses the same way of arguing to them, and
 “ exhorts them to yield obedience to their ma-
 “ sters, as unto the Lord, as unto God ; shewing
 “ them, that their masters, with respect to tem-
 “ poral affairs, stood in the place of God, and
 “ they were therefore to submit unto them, as
 “ unto God. Thus in the VII. Chapter of 1.
 “ Cor: the Apostle lays down this general rule,
 “ *Let every man abide in the same calling, wherein*
 “ *he is called,* that is, as he explains himself, whe-
 “ ther he be servant or whether he be free, let
 him

“ him not think that his condition is repugnant to
 “ his religion ; if he be servant, let him so con-
 “ tinue. *Servants*, says he in Ephes : vi, *be obe-*
 “ *dient unto them that are your Masters according to*
 “ *the flesh with fear and trembling, in singleness of your*
 “ *hearts, as unto Christ, not with eye service, as men*
 “ *pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the*
 “ *will of God from the heart : with goodwill do-*
 “ *ing service, as to the Lord not to men.* The
 “ same is repeated with some small variety of ex-
 “ pression in Coloss : iii : and in 1. Tim. vi. he
 “ treats of this matter with some warmth and af-
 “ firms that this doctrine of obedience is the law
 “ of God, and that whoever denies it, *consents not to*
 “ *wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus*
 “ *Christ and to the doctrine which is according to*
 “ *Godliness, but is proud, knowing nothing, doting*
 “ *about questions and strife of words---supposing*
 “ *gain to be Godliness.* In all which it is plain he
 “ refers to the opinion of such as taught that the
 “ Gospel had introduced a perfect state of freedom,
 “ dissolving all the antient ties between masters
 “ and servants : in opposition to which he teaches
 “ them, that their being Christians should make
 “ them better, not worse servants ; for that they
 “ ought to obey from the heart, as serving God,
 “ and not men. St. Peter likewise uses the same
 “ argument with the same view : *Submit your-*
 “ *selves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.*”

We cannot think that an establishment founded
 on the divine command, confirmed by the antient

fathers of the church and maintained by the most respectable modern authorities, such as this of the very learned and pious Bishop Sherlock, as the well known sentiments of that exemplary Pastor, Thomas Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man, in his much admired treatise of the means of instructing the Indians, as those of the Bishop of Gloucester in his sermon before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts in 1740, and those of the Bishop of Oxford in his sermon before the same Society in 1741, all which concur in acknowledging the legality of slavery to be expressly allowed by the Holy Scriptures, though they recommend instruction and proper treatment; We cannot We say admit, that such an establishment stands in need of any further support, or can possibly be weakened by the feeble attacks of enthusiasts; who probably may make that the first step to future attempts of undermining all legal authority, from which to "pretend an exemption is evidently "acting in opposition to the divine will and commandments."---That any one who had been twenty years in the West Indies should propose to punish a runaway slave by pulling his house down, is the most extraordinary blunder We ever met with, but he is writing for those who know nothing of the country, and does not wish to throw too clear a light on the subject.---Notwithstanding the long pompous parade of liberty and its effects, and the glory of having thrown out Fletcher's plan, slavery to this day subsists in Scotland, where they who work in coals and salt are compellable to work in them for life.

Master

Master and Slave in the French Colonies.

We are happy to say that our Island has rescued slaves from cruelty, has put so heavy a fine as £500 on maiming or disfiguring them, and has secured their property by a law.---Let Government reform her own abuses and appoint Governors of liberal sentiments, with genteel salaries, that they may not be tempted by perquisites; tho' if places or livings are to be sold, it is immaterial whether the Governor, or the person who resigns them, pockets the purchase.--The Reverend Essayist mentions "extraordinary efforts, that soon wear slaves out." We have already observed that the negroes can work in the West-Indies without being affected by the heat of the sun. If then we compare their work with that of the English labourer, we shall find, that six negroes do not do as much, certainly not more than one good English harvester, and can such efforts be called extraordinary? Were it practicable to cultivate the sugar cane with our own labourers, the ease, the saving would make every planter embrace it; but that can be done by black labourers only.---"French slaves are attached to the soil." Many have wished the English were the same, but the expediency of this measure is a disputed point, which we therefore leave to the judgment of the Legislature, as we have no right to direct.--The Essayist delights in florid imagery: this pretty picture of a "scanty, bruised, tin, or pewter measure by an unfeeling overseer," is the effusion of mere fancy: He is ill-naturedly
 severe

severe upon managers and overseers, yet we must suppose they are in general as humane as proprietors : We can see no reason why they should not be so, nor can we conceive that they could be so foolish as to aim at recommending themselves by starving the negroes of an estate, or that they should plume themselves upon savings in their allowances, any more than they would upon starving the cattle or mules. A mule is worth thirty pounds, a negro ninety. Which would self-interest think best worthy preserving and taking proper care of ; yet this author in many parts of his Essay represents the planter acting from such motives as must prove him rather out of his senses, than void of humanity : This is the rant of Enthusiasm, not the sober language of unprejudiced truth.---“ Had
 “ we officers as disinterested as the French, or
 “ had their Governors our principles of liberty
 “ both would be much happier than they are :”
 (Supposing this censure on Governors true, which We much doubt) possibly they might ; but providence distributes its gifts to all, to some one good thing, to others other blessings, that men may neither glory in their advantages, nor repine at the want of what others enjoy, but all rest contented in that situation, to which God hath called them.---Whoever has been any time in the French or Spanish Islands must know that it is to the despotic government, and as despotic priesthood, the rigour of the punishment they inflict, their exact police and attentive centinels, that the field prayers and the superior honesty of the negroes are
 to

to be imputed.---We wish to lead, to persuade, not to drive or terrify them into unmeaning, empty show---By this mildness of ours, many of the most sensible are led to examine our religion and embrace it from conviction : They are therefore real converts and behave well ; yet even with their assistance We cannot work upon their ignorant brethren ; and God forbid, that We should add to their present burdens that heavy load of ecclesiastical persecution, which under the management of zealous sectarists has already produced such dreadful calamities.

Master and Slave in the British Colonies.

“ We have men among us who dare boast of giving orders to their Watchmen not to bring home any slave they find breaking canes, but as they call it to hide them, that is, to kill and bury them, and accordingly every now and then some poor wretch is missed and some lacerated carcase is discovered.” Were this really the case, our Islanders would be in a more savage and deplorable state than the wild Indians of America, or the brutal Hottentots of Caffraria : every planter would be a wild man : his hand would be against every man and every man’s hand against him. If any man had made such a boast, he must have been despised : he need not have given his negroes orders to hide what he boasted of ordering to be done, nor they have disobeyed him, by burying the body so carelessly, that it should

should be discovered.---This "every now and then" may have happened once; We recollect one body found in that mangled condition; but that might be from revenge, jealousy, or ill will of some negro perhaps on the same estate: How many instances of barbarities will one British Magazine record in that most civilized community? yet we do not call them unprincipled.---There are old acts to secure the lives of slaves, and a new one to prevent their being maimed or disfigured, tho' the Reverend Essayist cannot find one; but Law, Physic, and Divinity are too much to be expected from one mortal, how distinguished soever his abilities may be in his own opinion.---We could wish our police better, and that the Mother country would rectify it, or direct us so to do: the shafts he aims at us, wound her; but he may heal all, as We are led to expect a complete universal system of commerce, rural œconomy and We suppose all arts and sciences, within a year or two, from the same laborious pen.---"Every where
 "and in every age the chain of slavery has been
 "fashioned and applied by the hand of liberty."
 Can we wonder at that, when we had the sanction of the divine law delivered by Moses? and pray by what other hand could it be applied, unless we were all slaves, or like Mahomet made use of slaves to destroy and enslave the masters; a most excellent example, which these writers seem desirous of following.---"Adventurers from Europe are
 "universally more cruel and morose towards slaves
 "than native West Indians." They may be so at
 first

first perhaps, or at least, their quickness makes them appear to be so, as few can have patience enough to bear with African indolence, and that drawling, creeping way of theirs, be the emergency ever so great; but all things find their level; by custom and use they cool down into the common course of acting, and it is not the country, but the natural temper of the man, that constitutes him humane or cruel.---An ox or a horse brought into comparison and competition with negroes is this Essayist's favourite allusion, but this is merely declamation for the charitable purpose of degrading the West Indians, who, if the fact were true, must be as void of common sense as of humanity; and act against their own interests on important occasions to preserve it in trivial concerns.---“So great is the proportion of Europeans
 “in all active stations here, that the character of
 “the community must be taken from them, not
 “from the natives. . . And when one considers how
 “these adventurers are usually collected, how of-
 “ten the refuse of each man's connections,
 “of every trade and every profession are thronged
 “in upon them, much sentiment, morality or re-
 “ligion cannot well be expected to be found with-
 “in the circle of their influence.” This was at least cruel to his countrymen, of whom these adventurers almost universally consist, and whose steadiness, perseverance and œconomy seldom fail of promoting them; or at least supplying them with a genteel provision. It is not the lower class of people who emigrate from Scotland, but generally

rally younger brothers of decent families, who have had some education, and are presented with a small purse, which is to be their portion: "with their staff they set out and frequently return with wealthy bands," the reward of industry. Many of this sort We have met with, whose abilities improved by some education and much study and attention, have as deservedly gained them favour, as their hospitality has done them honour. He should never have spoken evil of that class to which he once belonged; but persons climbing a ladder seldom look back at the rounds they have passed; and the higher they climb, the less attentive they are to their own imperfections.---" At four o'clock in the morning the bell rings to call the slaves into the field." Here is an error of the press, for four read five, that being the real hour of call, and frequently later.---As to the very great hardship of picking grass, the case stands thus;---a proper bundle of grass may be picked in less than half an hour, and the negroes are allowed from half past eleven to two o'clock, and from five to six in the afternoon; so that to say, this is extra labour "thrust into the hour of rest and weariness" is not so candid a representation as might have been expected. Grass must be had, and where estates do not furnish enough, Guinea grass is planted, and the young negroes are employed, and called the grass-gang. Were grass permitted to seed, so quick is vegetation that the estate would be covered, and to preserve the canes, it must then be rooted out under the name of weeds, a double trouble and a loss instead

stead of profit. To set this, what he calls hardship, in a clear light to Europeans, We will relate this plain fact. A negro frequently picks four bundles of grass, carries his master two and sells two. For the two he sells he gets six pence, and his daily wages if hired out come to eighteen pence. The four therefore are worth twelve pence and he has from three to four hours allowed for grass picking; so that in a third part of a day he can earn two thirds of his daily wages, besides the "hour" of rest and weariness." The whip the Essayist talks of in such affecting strains, is a picture heightened beyond reality: three, four, or five strokes is the heaviest punishment allowed the Overseer to order, and that only for neglect or laziness. Notwithstanding these florid descriptions We know several negroes under severe masters, who never once had a single stroke of the whip, and are sixty years old and upwards. As to the use made of the grass when pulled, it is nothing to the purpose of the subject under discussion, but censures must be passed on us poor Islanders, no matter how they are introduced, and our understandings impeached, as neither knowing nor pursuing our own true interests. Of that sort is sugar-making at night, which is now universally left off, as being contrary to interest as well as repugnant to humanity; tho' the person who set the example some years ago of relaxing in this case, did it from the latter principle, and not from that absurd reason alledged, of esteeming a negro worth ninety, less than a mule worth thirty pounds, which is a

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contradiction

contradiction to both interest, common sense, and humanity.---“ The tender feelings” are now to be worked up, and high painting, with extravagantly exaggerated figures to work on the misinformed reader’s imagination. Six or eight pounds of beef at the least---are diminished into a scrap, and the Island of St. Christopher most unjustly censured in the note, unless it should be another error of the press.---N. B. For scantily, read liberally: that must be the case, for that is the real truth.---Batchelors are not in general preferred to married men: They have been so in some instances, and this given as the reason: The Bachelor knows he is accountable in his own person for what is under lock and key in his possession: the married man is apt to trust his wife or child; and negroes can thief and impose upon them with greater ease and security; but this unjust censure afforded scope for picturesque description, and is worked up in the note to a laughable extravagance. ---His calculation of expences for negro-food and cloathing at an annual twenty six shillings is far below the most niggardly allowance. An English labourer’s expences, if by himself, and in health all the year, are estimated at £5 sterling. Every negro costs his master between 5 and £.6 sterling for those articles, and in Island taxes between two and three; in short the whole expence is above £8 sterling a year. An English labourer supposing him to work without intermission except Christmas and Easter earns but £15 and perhaps has a wife and four or five children, rent, &c. Nothing then but
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their incapacity to work in these climes would prevent the "self interested planter" from preferring them to negroes.---There may have been one instance of the Barbarities harangued on, but not lately; and the perpetrators were despised, and are now prevented, if severe laws well executed can prevent disorders.---The usage he sets forth for pregnant women, we have never seen nor heard of, and we are no less surprized that he a medical man versed and practised in the obstetric art, should not know the real cause of cramp and convulsions among children; namely an improper management at the birth; but which is now happily remedied since his quitting the island, by superior knowledge and attention.---The remainder of this section shews him assuming the dictatorial Legishatorship, stiff, haughty, dogmatic, neither allowing nor even thinking of submitting his proposals to superior authority.

Master and Slave in particular instances.

If as he acknowledges, "The slaves of many planters possess advantages beyond what the labouring man in Britain enjoys," Why should we run the risk of distressing or perhaps destroying the colonies by totally altering the plan, when the easier and safer method would be to bring the whole by degrees under the same regulations? That slaves do possess advantages beyond a labouring man in England is certain. To mention some

of them : A slave has an house and ground and pays no rent : As his family encreases, his master encreases his allowance, tho' not his labour : that allowance is the same, nay better in illness : he has no apothecary to pay, but is furnished with medicines and attendance without any expence : The fields furnish him with peppers, greens, fruit; and his hogs and poultry with almost sufficient to fatten as well as rear them without expence : Whatever stock his master purchases from him is at the market-price ; and tho' they are said to be " so severely and laboriously employed beyond " their natural powers all the week," they have a weekly dance all Saturday night, Sunday, and sometimes that night too. At work they sing or fimoak ; and going to light their pipe is given and received as a sufficient excuse for a quarter of an hour's absence. On one estate in Cayon Parish with about 160 negroes, among whom may be reckoned about 50 heads of families, they receive full £.500 sterling a year for cassava, other roots, greens, fruit, and stock, which is £10 each family. We heartily wish, (for the author's sake) we could apply his severe satire "on the man in contemplation before him," to any but a gentleman of real religion, virtue, and humanity, late of Nichola-Town ; but the estate, number of negroes, and method of making sugar, fix it on him as fully as the false motives, and mistated facts prove that it is really a creature of the Essayist's own imagination. " The managers stealing beans from the " horses to feed the negroes, the six nominal pints " weighing

“weighing about two pounds and a half” may mislead a European, but cannot impose on a West Indian: that gentleman continued making sugar indeed late in the winter to his own great detriment, not “to give his slaves some subsistence from the cane juice,” but to comfort them with the warm syrup, on the first approach of what they felt as the cold season. At his house the Essayist was long attended in a dangerous illness, but all benefits conferred were forgotten on his refusing to submit to priestly dictates for the management of his family in the borrowed garb of clerical advice. That family, as well as the master of it, had a real regard for religion; he and they regularly attended the Church, ’till forced from it by personal invectives from the pulpit. The gentleman was now defunct, but even the grave could not shelter him from undeserved censure; so implacable is priestly malice for a supposed affront, and so unjust the accusations that flow from it. It appears by the books of this gentleman’s estate, that the allowance was the same from a long time before his going to England, to the very day of his return: his attornies only continued, did not encrease it, as not finding any necessity to alter the benevolent plan laid down by a generous and virtuous family. On his return indeed, when more ground was put into canes, he encreased the allowance considerably, and the example was followed by many: He was eminently distinguished for humanity and tenderness: but partiality made the Essayist swallow every ill-natured anecdote with credulity.

credulity, and discharge it again with additional bitterness and gall. The whole of this censure therefore, is as unjust as it is ungrateful and uncharitable.--Another gentleman's conduct is highly extolled, as the Essayist was the doctor of the estate, but peace to that gentleman's ashes, he was a worthy man; tho' had he been otherwise, we war not with the dead, nor flatter the living.---- The next he mentions "where profit is the object," is highly extolled also; that person has too much good sense to be obliged to him for being set in so conspicuous a point of view: We own he has his merits, but we never heard he was celebrated for humanity; a virtue which this author harangues upon with such eloquence, tho' he himself treated his own negroes so harshly, that a most humane neighbour used to terrify those under his care and inspection, with threatening to sell them to the Parson.

The advancement of Slaves would
increase their social importance.

So it seems that "bad usage produces crimes," if the Essayist is to be credited, but we know of no bad usage, except as a punishment for them; and many go without any punishment that severely deserve it. However this gives the Essayist an opportunity of running wild into florid rant, and fancied scenes of pleasing horror, that may deceive the misinformed, but cannot influence the sensible understanding of any one that is acquainted with
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Their present importance to society as Slaves.

The Essayist's feelings are a fruitful topic, tho' he never had any real right to boast of them, but they are lugged in to introduce idle rant and empty declamation.--If slaves had "no friends here," how came an act to be passed unanimously in their favour, and for the protection of their persons and property.---As to his calculations, they may possibly be just, but they are not new : He has all the merit of a copyist.

Their present importance to Society
would be encreased by freedom.

"The few who have been advanced in social life make a considerable addition to the consumption of the white inhabitants." Here a distinction is necessary to be made : they who reside among the whites, and copy their manners, may indeed add some little matter to the consumption of our manufactures, but the generality of those who are made free, do not : they injure society : they either turn hucksters, or carry on a regular system of thievery with their late brethren : Scarce one labours in any way for the community,
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more for the plantations, or in any respect for the real advantage of society. Were all free, they would herd by themselves in the mountains, and be as mischievous and savage as the Caribbs: they would then indeed be naked and half-starved; but never would form themselves into an useful peasantry. We want no help from them against privateers: if free booters landed, free negroes would join the pillage.---The assertion that white labourers could cultivate the cane, and did in Barbados, is by no means true, and has been already contradicted by unquestionable authorities; and the decrease of the number of whites is owing to another cause, namely to the small lots, into which the country was at first divided, being laid together and purchased up by the rich proprietors, who from their affluence can afford to reside in England. Accumulation of wealth has that effect, 'till the head grows too big for the limbs, and the property is again divided among a set, who have address or force enough to overset the unwieldy carcase. ---The despotic laws of China, that compel the children to continue in the trade of their fathers, support their sugar plantations, but the same cause prevents their encrease; and they are in reality as absolute slaves, as the Africans, tho' they are not distinguished by that appellation.

Their masters would be profited by
their advancement.

“ At once to extend full liberty to, and thereby
“ bestow

" bestow due rank on our slaves would endanger
 " the property of their masters, and the trading
 " part of the nation connected with them, nor
 " would full liberty be a blessing to them." True,
 nor ever could it be so ; and if not, why does the
 Essayist dwell on the subject by setting forth
 greater advantages arising from what might be
 ruinous or at least injurious to both master and
 slave ? Why does he fly into general reflections,
 which can do no good, but tend only to loosen
 the bands of society, and induce slaves to look
 upon them as their enemies, whom hitherto they
 have honoured and esteem'd as their only friends ?
 ---His calculation of the value of rented slaves
 is such, as a very artful rich man might impose
 upon an ignorant or distressed one ; but if real,
 why a sugar planter should prefer employing slaves
 to freemen, if the latter could produce for him a
 greater clear income, We cannot conceive ; un-
 less the planter should be mad or devoid of sense.
 The real truth then must be, that instead of a
 greater income, he would not be able to work
 his lands at all ; but this favourite argument must
 be repeated over and over, though merely ideal
 and contrary to common sense and experience ;
 and the comparison of a free peasantry from Eng-
 land must be added to it to mislead ; for the Es-
 sayist must know it is impossible for them to work
 in these countries, where the native whites will
 sooner starve than attempt it : yet he adds " this
 " view of the subject cannot be controverted,"
 tho' merely the Balloon of fancy, a bubble that
 K must

must burst and the whole machinery must fall to the ground with it. He goes on "Were necessarily recruits provided at the expence of the Colony, a general manumission would be no immediate loss to the Planters:" Good again, who but the Planters are the Colony? Such a step must be our total ruin, and will nothing less suffice? Bennezet's wish was the most charitable of the two: How can this agree with his acknowledgment at the beginning of this section, that "at once to extend full liberty would injure their masters and not be a blessing to them." But we cannot expect consistency, where prejudice sways instead of reason.-----"Absolute freedom is doubtless within the plan of Providence." This assertion, like many others, has no grounds for it.---His Barbados friend deceives him. We have already proved, that white men never did cultivate that Colony, and it is as certain they never can ---- His repealing the Acts that impose fines on those who free their slaves would be injudicious, as such freemen are either perpetual hangers on to the Estate, hucksters, thieves, or receivers of stolen goods, not one a labourer, unless perhaps a poor mechanic: it would be more for the benefit of the Island to force those who gave freedom to give a subsistence for life along with it; without which the gift is no gift.---"Should a partial innovation take place, that present bugbear of European policy the balance of trade would be supposed to be in danger." This is indeed scattering firebrands, arrows, and death, and

and calling it sport. Trade would not be in danger; it would be past it, in real ruin and destruction; and should not that be supported which supports the kingdom, unless we are for a dominion of saints, and for an empty name of attempting to set up religion, undermine all civil establishments; though the fall of one must draw the other after it: This is like his favourite scheme of paying the national debts with a sponge, which he asserts must be applied, and unfeelingly adds, the sooner the better.---Some slaves might be capable of receiving instruction in religion, but in general they are utterly incapable, and obstinately stupid and attached to their own superstitions: If acquiring and enjoying property will better their ideas, they have now that privilege here.---The note on the dock yards shews us what an universal genius We have to deal with: Our little society is puzzled to follow him through the mazes his knowledge or fancy leads him into; any one single person must have attempted it in vain; but We happen to have some acquaintance with a Shipwright who informs us, that the expediency of job-work in the yards is still a disputed point: that other and better regulations were said to have been suggested on its being discovered, that ships so built were not faithfully built, nor would last half the time of those built by the day: But no matter, the Essayist must make a parade of his knowledge to introduce his power, as dictator, legislator, &c. &c. We can assure him his schemes are impracticable, and could wish he would permit the Planters to

know their own interest and pursue it quietly; unless he can fairly prove, that he has more sense than all of us put together; He would persuade us he is possessed of more humanity, did We not know him; and might succeed in persuading the ignorant, did We not communicate that knowledge.---“Relaxation of slavery would introduce
 “ploughs and it is a maxim not to do that labour
 “by a man, that you can execute by a brute.”
 Is it possible this sentence could proceed from a man who had been twenty years in the West Indies? but We forget, he is not writing to us or for us, but against us to those who know nothing of the matter. The nature of our soil is such, so light that there is no difficulty in breaking it up, and the hoe will work almost as easy as in a sand-heap; Yet this soil is of different depths and under it you come to a hard terrace; and if you break through that by any force, it opens a passage to a sort of pumice stone rocks, where the rain is all instantly absorbed and the soil perishes for want of it. Hoes naturally stop, when they meet with resistance: Ploughs go on, and break through all. This was the case with Mr. Gibbons's Estate, who persevered in this manner of cultivation, until he had nothing left to work upon. Besides, there are few estates where the land is level enough, or free enough from rocks, to allow of ploughing; and the very nature of the cultivation requires their being shaped by the hoe after the plough has done all it can. The cane holes run in rows with ridges on each side, to confine the rain that falls, of
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about one foot and a half high, and with cross ridges for the same purpose, of about six inches high : If the Trench-plough could make the long ones, as the holes are not six feet square, it would be impossible to make the short ones too, or adapt them to the various turns and risings of the ground ; for the art of holing consists in keeping each of those high ridges as nearly horizontal as possible, and accordingly they run in different lines forming angles and sweeps of different sizes, as the ground demands, and the skill of the manager directs : nor is it in the holing time we want the greatest number of labourers, but in the cutting, grinding, and disposing of the various parts of the produce, which it would puzzle even the Reverend Essayist to contrive with any cattle, how tractable soever : When the cane is cut, carried off, with the tops for the stock (a saving of that terrible task of grass-carrying for above half the year, which he never thought of) and with trash enough to boil the sugar, still there remains on the ground near two feet thickness of trash, not fastened to the soil like stubble, but loose and impossible to be ploughed in, if the plough could move ; which it cannot, 'till that trash is removed with nearly as much labour as digging the cane holes ; Ploughs then have been tryed and found detrimental, or at least useless ; and these are the reasons they are now laid aside ; not that which he gives, which is even beyond absurdity, as if one sort of orders was not quite as easily communicated as another.

Their

Their masters would be profited by allowing their slaves the privilege of a weekly Sabbath.

A pretty position, as if they did not: We are tired with repeatedly answering these repeated accusations, for which there is not the least ground. There is only one exception: When canes are burnt, they must instantly be brought to the mill or totally lost; and when slaves work under that necessity, they are paid for it; but no matter, Doctor Sangrado was highly extolled for his resolution by Gil-Blas "Perish high and low by your advice and prescriptions, rather than the noble Doctor Sangrado should contradict what he has once asserted."---The beginning of this section is curious. "We have proved that the gradual extension of freedom would have the best effects respecting both the master and community." A modest assumption! if bare assertions are to be allowed as proofs, We must admit this; We can see no other reason, nor the least shadow of argument. *He has* said before, it would injure their masters, and not benefit them; but no matter, every man has a right to contradict himself: self-love stifles the reproaches of conscience.---Invidious repetitions calculated to enrage, and mislead those unacquainted with the sugar-islands crowd many pages, but we have answered them so often, we shall take no further notice of them; let him rail on, and the galled horse wince: our withers are unwrung.---That the colony has suffered, is true: that private people have suffered, is also true; But

But charity would not interpret God's dispensations into judgments with unpitying ill-nature; or conclude, that because men were sufferers, they were the greatest sinners. Our Saviour who was mildness itself; sharply reproves such presumption: "Those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and slew them, were they sinners above all; I tell you, nay! but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."---His conclusion from Mechanicks is true, but the application is unfortunate: He cannot produce a slave that works diligently eight, nor will our humanity suffer one to be kept fourteen hours; tho' while he does work. We confess drawling on is a just description of it.

The advancement of slaves must accompany
their religious instruction.

The end is devoutly to be wished, but is unattainable by the means he proposes: if ever they are converted, it can only be in their present condition: But even here the same assertions recur, the same answers will suffice without obtruding them, 'till they disgust the reader: What but a repetition is it, to talk of "exalting to religion" "whom our avarice has depressed to brutality." These are his own assertions, by this time converted into axioms in his imagination.---"To make "a man religious we must endow him with the "rights of a man." He has those, which God allotted him; a right to life, to property, to food, to raiment and protection: The difficulty arises from

from their own savage obstinacy, their invincible ignorance, and unruly passions, if free to follow their dictates.

Examples of the difficulty found in instructing slaves in their present state.

The Reverend Mr. Robertson's account appears impartial and written with a sincere design of public utility : The Essay before us seems calculated for private interest, for adapting itself to the prejudices of a great man and to compliment his decision, if it deserves the name ; tho' even that very decision has been ill understood ; the language of flattery has formed meanings for it that it never meant and exalted it into authority far beyond its real purport.----“ The managers injudicious
 “ choice of an instructor blasted every reasonable
 “ expectation.” What a pity our Essayist had not got this salary too and monopolized the whole business of a West-India estate, Surgeon, Parson, Man-midwife, Instructor, and Manager ! How cruel is this censure of a brother Clergyman, even if he were blameable in some respects ; but the Essayist deals in Grotesque painting : this picture which he has drawn is a caricatura, extravagantly aggravated :---That the Instructor does his duty by the negroes is certain, as the present manager never omits his, or permits any one to impose upon his employer by omitting theirs, tho' his humanity is as unquestionable as his diligence. Charity should have induced the Reverend Essayist instead

stead of exposing to cover a brother's failings with her amiable cloak, unless he had this excuse, that he wanted it for his own at home, where charity begins, and sometimes ends --- The remainder of this section is an idle attempt of ridicule, which from any pen, especially a clergyman's, must rather injure than advance religion, and which has not even that "ostensible decency" recommended, and generally practised by him.

Obstacles that the Moravian Missions have to struggle with.

By this account of the Moravians, they act upon principles entirely different from those of the Essayist; they endeavour to make slaves serve God in that state wherein he has placed them, instead of unsettling their heads, and making them giddy with a prospect of what they do not understand: they who wish to alleviate, not change their condition, may succeed in a degree; but probably that success is more owing to their disinterestedness than their abilities or their disciple's capacities: This is an experiment which we are convinced he never yet thought of.

Inefficacy of the author's private attempts to instruct slaves.

He says " he could not have carried on house-keeping without a degree of severity abhorrent to his temper." Similar professions came from

a commanding officer once in America with equal plausibility, and equal justice. Persons unacquainted with the real state of facts might be deceived, but we know that our Essayist punished with more severity than most; as managers can testify, and many drivers have given under their hands, and left their marks very visibly impressed. --- If he, with all his advantages, could not succeed with ten or a dozen negroes in twenty years, can he expect we should with 500 in that time? The experiment would be rather costly: An instructor at £.400 sterling expence for 20 years would amount to £.8000 sterling, and if he should not succeed after all, what a sum of money and time is thrown away! We may conclude that he would not, for sure a physician of the soul and body too, with his own example as well as precepts, in a well regulated family, had infinite advantages above what any other person could be possessed of, even with every addition of discipline and method; yet these, with well paid instructors, will not supersede the necessity of corporal punishment in ships of war, as We observed before; but his repetitions force us to be guilty of the same fault. --- Suppose an estate with 500 negroes to produce £.4000 a year, and after 20 years experiment to be sold. It will raise but ten years purchase, and two years purchase has been paid to the instructor. The value then is reduced to eight years purchase, which is about one fourth of the value of European estates. At this rate the most considerable owners are not so greatly to be envied nor

so immensely rich as to authorize further impositions, whatever name they come under, whether as taxes, or improvements, as projectors call them. ---Where Africans are free, religion cannot be introduced among them. All attempts have been in vain : and as to industry, are there not national characters ? Is not that of the Africans obstinacy, low cunning, and excessive indolence ? would they work when they were free to remain idle, who can hardly be forced to it, when they know the obligations they are under, and the severity that must attend their disobedience ? But these assertions of free Africans working freely are trifles in comparison of what follows : they are only absurdities, this is really destructive and replete with mischief. “Master and slave are in every respect opposite terms, the persons to whom they are applied, are natural enemies to each other.” Happily this is by no means true. The sensible master, even setting aside religion and humanity, looks on a fine slave with more satisfaction than on a fine horse : The slave looks on his master as his feeder, his protector, his father. They have often ventured their lives for each other ; Would this author loosen the bands of society, and raise a spirit of enmity that would certainly be ruinous to both parties ? The mistakes of would-be legislators threaten dreadful consequences, unless prevented by the plain sense and real interest of the community. It is a pity the proposing a law is not attended with the same solemnity and danger as we have upon record, (with an halter about the

neck) and if it was on fair discussion proved to be absurd, impracticable, or pernicious, the penalty to be capital.---If slaves are capable of being converted, and the Essayist cannot guess why he did not succeed with his, some of his old acquaintance here point out some peculiarities, that might contribute to prevent his success. He was by no means the humane master he pretends: He often punished severely, and had a constant peevishness and harshness in his temper, which terrified many slaves, even on the estates he attended as surgeon, from applying to him for relief; they rather chose to suffer illness, than encounter his asperity of expression. Can he then have given the true reason for going to England? His situation here is, in this section, "a state of ease and affluence," in a former it was "an insufficient provision:" A true reason cannot proceed from such positive contradictions. We may suppose then he went from those friends (who knew him) in order to publish this Essay, and by flattering their prejudices, cajole some new ones, (who did not know him) into procuring him preferment at home: He had sold St. Christopher.

Inefficacy of the author's public
attempts to instruct slaves.

We know he met with no hindrance from owners or managers, but the indolence, ignorance, and prepossession of the slaves themselves was the true cause, and will always operate, especially if improper

per measures are pursued : The Moravians are not molested now, and succeed with some : We have already given the reason for it.---His churches were decently attended by his Parishioners, 'till personal invectives from the pulpit drove them from their duty : but perhaps it was their duty patiently to stay and hear them : if so, We West-Indians must lament our quickness of resentment, and divide the fault of too much heat between the climate and ourselves.

The manner suggested in which private attempts on large Plantations to improve Slaves may probably succeed.

Masters think the most probable means of converting slaves to religion is to leave them to their own judgments, where they have any : Once call it a duty they set themselves obstinately against it and shut their ears to the mildest and soundest instruction. But the West-India Legislator decides at once for a trifling experiment at the expence of about 8000*l.* sterling, to do that duty, which, if it can be executed, belongs to the Parish Priests to perform : Surely they might attend the Estates in rotation, this would give them some employment and, like a tub to the whale, might prevent their interfering in politicks, and disturbing the community----The other experiment, though the Instructor understood physick also, would be rather too expensive. *Æsop* tells us, when a small town was to be fortified and the inhabitants met to consider

consider on the means ; the Carpenter proposed strong posts and pallisadoes, the Black-smith iron rails, the Grave-digger a deep trench, and the Tanner an enclosure of leather : Such is our predilection for the profession in which we were educated, that it is a wonder we should ever quit it.--

“ As slaves might be made to perform their own work under the direction of the Overseer, their patches of ground would be better cultivated.”

This passage is produced merely to be compared with a preceding assertion. “ A Manager made slaves exert themselves on Sundays as much in their own ground as in their master’s fields throughout the week ; the consequence was, the Plantation required a yearly supply of slaves. ” Are these passages to be reconciled or are we to kill our negroes ?--The Building a large public thatched room for their revels contradicts a law of the country which forbids such meetings, as they were ever found to be productive of thievery and licentiousness.----The ordering the Instructor to inspect the operations of the cart-whip must be in his capacity of Surgeon : that is the unfeeling vocation that attends such executions. Yet in the next breath imagination paints a scene, which it labours to set forth as the effusions of humanity. “ These are savages ravished from their huts.” That is, in reality and truth if consulted, slaves sold by their owners, according to the laws of their own country. There is no end of this author’s mistakes and repetitions.-----

We are not surprized at the German’s military system.

system prevailing, as instant death ensued on disobedience; but the experiment might be dangerous; the body, when formed, might revolt together: and their masters, if overpowered, would never be allowed a fair trial, tho' the slaves were, while the masters held the government.

We are out of breath in attempting to follow the Author in his ostentatious parade of Lyncurgus, Moses, English laws, Trade, and Paraguay, all huddled together in two leaves, and reformed in one note.---There are two reasons why slaves exert themselves in their walks: they are following their own fancies instead of their master's commands, and may be elevated for short exertions, which it would be imprudence to try, and folly to think of supporting, were they to last the whole day.

Natural capacity of Slaves vindicated.

It would be a difficult task to vindicate that capacity, for tho' some few have slight dawnings of genius the generality have been incapable of the most trivial improvements, and those they did succeed in, were only such as might be supposed to spring from craft, rather than solid understanding.

Objections to African capacity drawn from Philosophy considered.

Under the notion of these enquiries, the Author is so vague, and flies out so multifariously,
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and so little to the purpose, it is neither agreeable nor worth our while to follow him. Hume may be wrong, but that does not constitute his being in the right, or prove that Queen Dido's subjects were black. The sun certainly does not make them so, though he supposes it.---If he had real humanity, could he even with a hint to be given by another, much more could he himself ever mention emasculating negroes in order to make fine fingers of them; though he might mean this ironically, it might be taken literally, were masters as cruel and oppressive, as he has represented them. ---This philosophical chapter is closed by appeals to Scripture, and tho' that is departing from the subject as proposed, he catches an opportunity of praising the Jews, and by fair speeches makes some amends for the injuries they suffered through his means at St. Eustatius.

Objections to African capacity
drawn from form considered.

This section contains mere fighting with shadows, which like the last is inconclusive, and nothing to the purpose, let it be determined in whatever manner the Essayist may most approve of.---Some of his assertions however we cannot help taking notice of; " negro children are born white." " ---The weather and the sun cause freckles, which are a species of blackness." Let the European ladies and surgeons dispute the latter assertion; as to the first, we absolutely pronounce
that

that contrary to plain fact and daily experience, and are surprized he could be so inattentive in the obstetric part of his profession ; for all Midwives know that negro children are born of a reddish dusky yellow, and as white children become quite white, so these children become quite black, by degrees, without the least exposure to wind, weather, or sun ; and the most ignorant black Midwife will tell you the moment the child is born whether it is a negro or mulatto, as both the hair and the colour at the roots of it are not only different from those of white children, but essentially so from each other.--After endeavouring to establish that there is no difference, the Essayist proceeds to shew that there is, “ Though they work naked in the hottest hours their skin never blisters, while vagabond white sailors blister wherever the sun reaches them : the negroes enjoy hot dry weather, while moisture and cold make them shiver and crouch down helpless and spent.” It seems then after all there is a difference in the skin, which instead of vain attempts of what pride calls philosophy, to account for, may justly be resolved into the will of God, which has fitted them for that station wherein they are placed ; and has ordained that contrary to all the observations of naturalists,---that heat sinks deeper into black than into any colour, and consequently is most strongly repelled by white---yet the negroes only can bear the heat of these climates, which would kill a labouring white European in less than a year ; there is also another as

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unaccountable

unaccountable a difference in the skin of negroes, which no care can prevent, no remedy remove: But We wish not to throw out any thing which an European could misconstrue into a reflection, or which could give the meanest African any uneasiness: We wish not "to break the bruised reed."

Objections to African capacity drawn
from Anatomy considered.

Here the Essayist gets into the clouds and is frequently unintelligible, or tending to no useful point of information; but set the question in whatever light fancy may direct, and run trifling wild digressions through all the regions of knowledge or imagination, the question reverts,----What is the state of Africans in their own country? Do We not better that state by buying them? We certainly have proved that We do. How then are they our equals? Such writers may degrade their own colour, but cannot raise the black's. Gratitude should make the Africans faithful servants, had they sentiments productive of that virtue.---Mr. Ferguson was a proof of a low peasant attaining a "high station in literature." And We should suppose that if We should meet a Ferguson among our negroes, he would not escape our notice or fail of a reward.

Objections

Objections to African capacity drawn
from Observation considered.

“ In what chapter of nature’s law,” says the Essayist, “ is it declared that one quarter of the “ Globe shall breed slaves for the rest.” We cannot name the chapter, but it is so declared in the code of their own national laws, and practice.---- He says, “ It is blasphemy, We reply it is Moses. --He confuses the question by talking of inferior races, if for races we read ranks, it is just.----As to negro abilities there may have been some few instances, but in general We repeat that they are miserably stupid. White servants will hang pictures, lay tables, and fold cloths strait, not one negro in a thousand, though bred a carpenter and assisted with his square and rule, can do it, after many years practice.---A curious note launches forth into the praise of his own humanity and benevolence, and proves triumphantly what has been proved a million of times to his hands, “ that mere “ matter is incapable of thinking.”

African capacity vindicated from experience.

We allow that negroes can do rough work and imitate tolerably well, but they have no exactness of eye, and never can arise to any perfection, any degree of elegance. A real judge will instantly tell, whether a house has been built by a black or white work man. -- Whatever discoveries the Justice’s private examinations or the Bench afforded,

We cannot but think it was injudicious to mention that Magistracy, from which he was degraded. ---He speaks of a negro boy kidnapped from Africa, many whites were treated in the same manner from England, even after our laws made that offence capital. ---He mentions another of his own, who would stand to be cut in pieces by the whip. Where slept his boasted humanity, while that cruel operation was performing? --- Quashie's story is dressed out in fine glaring colours, but unfortunately is not agreeable to truth; for the fact was (as We had it from an eye witness) that he was pursued for inveigling a female slave from another estate. His master ran after him, was entangled in some pease, and fell down; but recovered himself, and came near enough, to think, he could dash the old razor out of his hand, with which he threatened to cut his own throat; but the master missed his blow, and the slave half executed his threats; he lived several days, long enough to acknowledge and lament his passion; but "the glossy honours of his skin" had before that suffered for repeated insolence and transgressions. --- As to Africans on their own coast, supposing that masters are kind, generous and well informed, yet they all of them have their slaves, whose families remain unalterably in the same state, let their qualifications or virtues be what they will. This then is the only place where they can expect a reward for their superior excellencies, if Providence has been kind enough to enable them to distinguish themselves: That some have done so We grant, but

but the numbers are much too few to constitute any pretence to national capacity.

Plan for the conversion and improvement
of African Slaves.

There are so many frequently-answered repetitions in this section, and such a parade of the self-appointed legislator, it neither can deserve nor require further notice, than bare referring the patient reader to the former parts of our answer, where the "Author's affection to the cause of humanity, religion, and his country will appear in its true light."

Establishment of Clergy and their duty
among Slaves.

The "emoluments of two parishes being barely sufficient for the decent support of a family" is again repeated: yet the Reverend Essayist secured the two richest livings and contrived to leave that a single one, which to a resident Minister was nearly one third less advantageous, than either of his: It was happy he had another profession to provide a fortune for his family, if the livings could only support it.--Schools certainly are necessary, and it were to be wished such could be established as would supersede the necessity of sending youth to England; but notwithstanding the many inconveniencies that attend it, We fear the custom must still continue, as there is no other
effectual

effectual method of keeping them apart from the negroes, the doing which ought to be every parent's first care and attention.---The " finding a sensible, sober negro to be surety for another's good behaviour," has been often attempted, but always in vain.---The Essayist's describing that as growing into a custom, (for the planters to put on the gown,) of which we have no one instance in the island, has been already noticed.

General improvement of slaves.

No one can more sincerely wish this than the planter; but the means must be more judicious, than any which have been hitherto proposed: mere declamation and flying off into subjects, hard to be understood, and liable to be wrested to the detriment of religion, can never answer that purpose; and such is this section, wide of the point, and dressed out for parade, not real service.

Privileges granted and Police extended to Slaves.

Had the Essayist's whole work consisted of this single chapter only, We should have been saved the disagreeable task of criticizing on his performance; and as he then would have avoided the imputation of dealing in unmerited accusations, We should have had no cause to produce any against him, tho' justly deserved. We are happy in approving the greatest part of this section, and will gladly contribute to propose and carry into execution whate-

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ver may tend to the increase of well judged privi-
 leges, and the establishment of a regular and equi-
 table police. This subject is already begun upon
 in St. Christopher. The lives, the limbs, the
 faces, and properties of negroes are secured by
 law. The power of the master may be further
 restrained by a Judge, who should take all correc-
 tions of a heavier nature than a few stripes into his
 own hands. The slave really kidnapped, or not fairly
 purchased, should be sent back free, if he desired
 it, at the Colony's expence; and the Captain of
 the ship prosecuted for damages, which, there is
 no doubt, would fully indemnify it for all trouble,
 and charges. For these two last benevolent hints
 We are indebted to the African Treatise, let us
 return to the Essay. "A slave flagrantly ill treat-
 ed should be sold for the benefit of the public
 at an easy rate to some considerate man. To
 make a man free who cannot earn an honest
 living, would be inhuman and impolitic; it is
 letting loose on society a thief in despair." This
 is very just, and to enforce it, We could wish a
 law that should oblige every master who did so,
 to settle an annuity on that slave, that should be a
 sufficient maintenance for life; and even if masters
 were restrained from improper manumissions, if
 there was a Judge, or even a Court, appointed
 to allow or disallow of their manumissions and
 the conditions of them, to bestow freedom as the
 reward of merit, or refuse it if undeserved, it would
 be no inconsiderable improvement to our Police.-
 We have already secured their property from vio-
 lation.

lation in some cases, we might extend it to all, honestly acquired.---The marriages of slaves is also a point much to be wished, and the clergy would doubtless do their part to encourage it, by taking no fees, but this has been already attempted by very considerable rewards, as an house, larger extent of ground, cloathing for them, and promised for their children, but all without success:---If any means could be thought of to effect it, it would greatly improve and humanize them:---“ The *minimum* of a negroes allowance for cloaths and provisions should be settled by law. Slaves should be allowed Saturday afternoon as at Jamaica, for their own work, and to wash their clothes. Sunday should be wholly their own.” (Sunday is so now.) “ Their little properties should be secured to them: their families should not be torn from them:” (They seldom are, We may say never, but by distress of the master.) “ All plantation-slaves, as in Antigua, should be considered as fixed to the freehold, and not carried away wantonly at pleasure.”---So far We approve, and other advantages might arise, could We proceed with these, as we have already began with some. To discourage improper connections, We would also wish all mulattoes should be trained to some trade or business, and sent out free at the age of twenty one years, at the expence of their fathers; and if a man has a mulatto born to him by another person’s negress, he should pay to the owner ten pounds sterling, as soon as the child was weaned: this would indemnify him for the teaching

teaching the trade and freedom of the child.----
 On these outlines We would wish to see their improvement grounded and their advantages made the object of their owner's and the legislature's utmost and most mature attention; but to inveigh against slavery as unnatural, to propose carrying on the work of plantations with them if free, or to degrade freedom into not only making it cheap and common but universal; and holding forth such a doctrine, before they are in any degree fitting to receive or use it, either to their own advantage or that of the community; nay if attained, when they would most certainly abuse it to the manifest detriment and perhaps destruction of both, is such a mixture of ignorance in both religious and civil polity as We cannot account for in any person of common sense, common education and experience.

C O N C L U S I O N.

We are extremely concerned that we cannot join the Essayist here, as we did in great part of the last section. Here his own interests advance and prevent all sight of the real subject in hand: his own character of benevolence, of humanity, and the "tender feelings" is brought forward in support of the prejudices of those misinformed great men, who may be influenced by such pretences to take a brother by the hand: But that these effusions are mere pretences, we have proved, and can further prove by this cruel instance from
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his own work. After his censures on a brother clergyman for faults, severely pointed out, and highly exaggerated, he adds, " he had a salary " which without being earned he punctually received." This reflection might injure that clergyman's private fortune, who has a large family, and no resources but his livings; who does whatever duty is enjoined him, and has at least the merit of universal good-will to mankind: We wish our reflections on the Essayist to have no other effect than defending ourselves, not injuring him; as how can an independent fortune be injured? We only observe that he who has a glass head should not throw stones: Can the Reverend Essayist be justly offended at our treating him as he has a brother clergyman, in pointing out salaries received by him, and never earned? Can he, whom no entreaties could move to spare this brother clergyman, to omit the censure, or soften any part of his asperity, be surprised at our " setting " him up as a beacon near a dangerous shoal, to " which the public has a right?" Whatever others may think of this last sentence, he cannot deem it too severe, as he must recollect his having used it in answer to those entreaties: Can he wonder if in defence of an injured community, (which both in general reflections and in particular anecdotes of individuals, he has so unjustly traduced,) We have endeavoured to shew the world that no degree of credibility can possibly be allowed him? We trust We have clearly demonstrated the futility of those principles on which he grounds his destructive as-
sertions.

fections, and raises superstructures that inevitably must fall, though they are the result of fourteen years labour, and twenty years experience: Time sadly misapplied! which might have been employed to much better purposes.

We now leave him to future schemes, to establishing laws for other countries, and to opening more new channels for trade, and shutting up the old; We content ourselves with these conclusions, naturally flowing from the premises-----That the purchasing slaves is not only allowed, but expressly commanded in holy writ-----That they are happier as slaves, and in a more civilized state, than they would be as freemen-----That our kind and proper treatment of them is the duty enjoined by divine laws and ought to be confirmed (where it is not already) by those of the mother country and colonies.---That St. Christopher has begun and is well disposed to proceed in such regulations-----That if ever negroes are converted to the profession and practice of Christianity, it must be in their present state---That the schemes of the Essayist are visionary and impracticable, and that the attempting to carry them into execution would be pernicious, and perhaps ruinous and subversive of the community---That neither the public nor individuals of St. Christopher deserve the malevolent censures thrown out against them, nor on the strictest enquiry can We hear of any West-India Islands that merit such asperity---That his

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assertions

assertions are empty froth, and his laboured and florid declamations mere whipped syllabub without substance or connection----That his work is full of absurdities and contradictions----That his anecdotes are not to be depended upon, as they arise from personal motives instead of a sincere love of truth, and that his pretences to benevolence and humanity are equally frivolous and without foundation.

These are the unanimous sentiments of our little society, and even his best friends have been so much severer upon his performance than We have “ (in declaring that “ his illnatured groundless, “ and illfounded anecdotes, his general and unjust “ reflections, his undeserved abuse, his bitterness “ and gall, and numberless marks of illnature “ and illmanners have blasted his book,)” that We believe We may venture to add, the same opinion prevails, without a single exception, in every planter and inhabitant of St. Christopher.

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